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ABSTRACT

The French of English speaking students of French as a second language is compared with "francais populaire" (FP) in order to determine similarities in their tendency toward simplified grammar and morphology. Simplifying characteristics that are typical of FP were obtained from French working class sources, while simplification patterns of French as a second language were drawn from 100 compositions written by university students enrolled in intermediate level French courses. Simplification errors found in the student compositions are classified according to corresponding grammatical traits of FP, including general morphology and syntax, articles, substantives, adjectives, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, and prepositions. Research on language simplification processes, data collection and analysis methods, and pedagogical implications are discussed. The data analysis shows that speakers of FP and American students of French employ simplification systems that are similar in many respects. (RW)

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Virginia Lynn Kenemer

Le "français populaire" and French as a Second Language: A Comparative Study of Language Simplification

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RESUME

La présente étude compare les erreurs commises par des étudiants de français langue étrangère aux Etats-Unis avec divers aspects de la langue dite "français populaire." L'objectif principal concerne l'analyse du phénomène de *simplification*. On prétend que beaucoup d'erreurs des apprenants viennent du fait qu'ils sont obligés de simplifier la grammaire et le vocabulaire auxquels ils sont exposés pour les intégrer dans leur système linguistique personnel (c'est-à-dire, pour les "apprendre"). Plusieurs linguistes ont déjà observé une sorte de réduction des langues maternelles, employée surtout dans la classe ouvrière, qui permet aux locuteurs de suivre la loi du moindre effort. Alors, si les apprenants montrent la même tendance, nous aurons des indications importantes des relations qui existent entre l'apprentissage d'une langue seconde et celui d'une langue maternelle.

L'auteur analyse des erreurs repérées d'une centaine de compositions écrites par des étudiants de première et de deuxième années de français à l'University of Georgia (USA). En se servant également de quatre descriptions préexistantes du français populaire, elle trouve de nombreuses similarités entre les deux systèmes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER ONE: SIMPLIFICATION IN THE LITERATURE 3

I. Error Analysis and Language Systems 3
II. Language Universals 5
III. Notions of Simplification 7
IV. *Français populaire, français avancé* and Simplification 9

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY 17

I. Materials Used for Analysis 17
II. Classification of Errors 18
III. Limitations of the Study 19

CHAPTER THREE: ANALYSIS OF THE DATA 22

I. General Morphology and Syntax 22
II. Articles 26
III. Substantives 27
IV. Adjectives 29
V. Pronouns 31
VI. Verbs 33
VII. Adverbs 39
VIII. Prepositions 40

CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSION 43

I. Implications of the Analysis 43
II. Pedagogical Applications 44
III. Suggestions for Further Research 46

BIBLIOGRAPHY 48

INTRODUCTION

From the first weeks of acquiring a second language, a learner uses simplified language structures in order to communicate. Patterns of simplification appear in various language forms, such as pidgins and creoles, colloquial conversation, first-language learning, and "baby talk." The linguist W.G. Widdowson describes simplification as "the process whereby a language user adjusts his language behavior in the interests of communicative effectiveness." Thus, errors or deviances from the standard form indicate, according to Widdowson, one's attempt to convert linguistic knowledge into communicative use.[1]

A language form which appears simplified in comparison with the standard language may result from lack of grammatical knowledge, confusion of the standard language rules, or deliberate reduction of an already-mastered language level. Evidence shows that the resulting elicitations tend to add more regularity to the language.

Français populaire (French "tel qu'il est aujourd'hui parlé dans le peuple"[2]) also shows evidence of simplification processes at work. Pierre Guiraud suggests that this idiom, when allowed to develop on its own, tends to eliminate awkward and irregular forms and establish a simpler and more coherent structure based on communicative needs.[3]

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that the language of American students of French resembles *français populaire* (FP) in its tendencies toward simplified grammar and morphology. This project should be considered as only a preliminary step toward suggesting common cognitive systems. However, if significant links between the two language forms appear, then this study would support and advance a current hypothesis assuming the existence of universal language simplification processes.[4]

To compare simplification patterns of FP and student French, a list of simplifying characteristics will be presented which are typical of FP, according to the best sources available.[5] The sources describing FP take examples from the letters and conversations of members of the French working class. The source of French being learned as a second language will come from one hundred randomly-selected compositions written by students enrolled in intermediate-level French classes at the University of Georgia. These essays serve to provide specimens of personal expression in the students' second language. After the compositions are analyzed for errors showing simplification, the errors found will be categorized grammatically according to corresponding FP traits. Conclusions will be based on this comparative error analysis.

The first chapter will describe language simplification processes and discuss recent research in the field. The second chapter explains the methods used to collect and analyze the data for this project, and lists the limitations of the study. The classification and analysis of the simplification data follow in the third chapter, with errors of learner French presented along with corresponding characteristics of FP. Finally, the fourth chapter will include conclusions of the analysis, pedagogical implications and suggestions for further research.

NOTES

[1] Henry G. Widdowson, "The Significance of Simplification," *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 1, No. 1 (1978), 15-16.

[2] Pierre Guiraud, *Le français populaire*, 4th ed., Que sais-je? , 1172 (Paris: PUF, 1978), p. 6.

[3] Guiraud, pp. 16-17.

[4] See Section II of the following chapter.

[5] Major sources of FP tendencies are: Henri Bauche, *Le langage populaire*, 4th ed. (1928; rpt. Paris: Payot, 1951); Henri Frei, *La grammaire des fautes*, (1929; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine, 1971); Pierre Guiraud, *Le français populaire*; and Georg Steinmeyer, *Historische Aspekte des Français avancé*, Kölner Romanistische Arbeiten, 56 (Geneva: Droz, 1979).

CHAPTER ONE:

SIMPLIFICATION IN THE LITERATURE

I. Error Analysis and Language Systems

During the past fifteen years, linguists and pedagogues have been studying the significance of errors made in the process of language learning. S. Pit Corder, in 1967, advanced a shift in pedagogical study from teaching methods to learning methods with an article that showed the usefulness of analyzing language errors:

> A learner's errors ... are significant in three different ways. First to the teacher, in that they tell him, if he undertakes a systematic analysis, how far towards the goal the learner has progressed and, consequently, what remains for him to learn. Second, they provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in his discovery of the language. Thirdly (and in a sense this is their most important aspect) they are indispensable to the learner himself, because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learner uses in order to learn. It is a way the learner has of testing his hypotheses about the nature of the language he is learning. The making of errors then is a strategy employed both by children acquiring their mother tongue and by those learning a second language.[6]

The idea of a system is essential to Corder's study and to the studies of many researchers who follow him. He describes errors of performance ("mistakes") as unsystematic, because "such slips of the tongue (or pen)" are random, "due to memory lapses, physical states, such as tiredness and psychological conditions such as strong emotion." Since they do not show a defect in knowledge of a language, they are of no significance to the language acquisition process. Errors of competence ("errors") are, according to Corder, systematic errors, from which one may reconstruct a learner's "transitional competence" or knowledge of a language at a particular time.[7]

From the study of errors as evidence of strategies in a system, Larry Selinker introduced in 1969 the term "interlanguage," a separate linguistic system based upon "the observable output from a speaker's attempt to produce a foreign norm."[8] Interlanguage, then, represents a developmental stage between the native and target language which may be observed in the utterances of a second-language learner. Selinker emphasizes the psychological importance of the learner system in a later article entitled "Interlanguage" (1972). There he proposes that native language, target language and interlanguage are united in a "latent psychological structure." This latent structure is "an already formulated arrangement in the brain, which is activated whenever an adult attempts to produce meanings... in a second language which he is learning." One feature of interlanguage that Selinker explains is "fossilization," a psychological device that locks certain rules and subsystems into the interlanguage regardless of the previous amount of instruction in the target language. This mechanism, according to Selinker, also exists in the latent psychological structure. Another characteristic of interlanguage is "backsliding," a phenomenon which accounts for the regular recurrence of errors in the learner's second-language performance even when the deviant performance was thought to be eliminated earlier.[9]

In 1971, William Nemser proposed a system similar to interlanguage, also based on learner errors, but his term, "approximative systems," implies a more developmental

character of language acquisition, and the nature of his study is pedagogical rather than psychological. Nemser's "approximative systems" refers to the deviant linguistic system which is actually used by the learner while he attempts to use the target language. He adds that such approximative systems may vary in character according to the level of proficiency, learner experience, communication function, and personal learning characteristics.[10] Nemser suggests that although learner systems are transient by definition, error analysis shows clear evidence of a regularity in common interlanguages which could provide a basis for teaching strategies. Despite the developmental nature of interlanguages, Nemser allows for "stable varieties" of approximative systems. For example, errors found in "immigrant speech" indicate that the speaker of the target language has "reached a plateau."[11] In many ways, this idea resembles Selinker's fossilization mechanism.

Other linguists in the past five years have sought to elaborate on the definition of interlanguage. Christian Adjemian points out that interlanguages are "permeable," that is, open to transfer errors ("interference") and over-generalization. Elaine Tarone expands the notion of permeability, stating that target- and native-language rules seem to invade the interlanguage rule system in formal situations more frequently than in informal, spontaneous situations.[12]

This "invasion" from the native language — interference — has long been accepted as a common phenomenon in second-language learning. In 1957, Robert Lado made the assumption that "we can predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulty in learning, and those that will not cause difficulty, by comparing systematically the language and culture to be learned with the native language and culture of the student."[13] One 1975 study shows interference as the source of the majority of second-language errors, and a later study mentions that the interference factor is strong even in advanced second-language learners. However, other evidence shows that interference outside the field of phonology is not the major source of errors in second-language learners.[14] Through error analysis, several recent studies point out the importance of another mental process that affects interlanguage output which, unlike interference, is common to all language learners. In a comparison of interference errors and "general" errors, Faith Ann Johansson posits these possible causes of errors in the "general" category: common psychological processes, common learning strategies (including overgeneralization), inherent "universal" difficulties or a common sociocultural situation.[15]

One of the first linguists to hypothesize this universal process of language learning was Otto Jespersen, in comparing child language, pidgins, and an approximative version of a target language:

> ... in all these seemingly different cases the same mental factor is at work, namely imperfect mastery of a language, which in its initial stage, in the child with its first language and in a grown-up with a second language learnt by imperfect method, leads to a superficial knowledge of the most indispensable words, with a total disregard of grammar (1922).[16]

Corder is among those who have seen, beyond native interference in interlanguage, similar patterns of this "superficial knowledge of the most indispensable words" and places them within a dynamic system:

> ... it is becoming clear that the interlanguage continuum is not simply one of progressive restructuring of the mother tongue systems and that the errors made by learners are not largely transfer errors, but that their utterances show evidence of a dynamic system similar to that of a child acquiring his mother tongue and may, at least to some extent, follow the same sequence of stages... A revised definition of an interlanguage continuum might now read: a dynamic, goal-oriented language system of increasing complexity.[17]

This language system has been assigned various names and has been subdivided by some researchers into several categories, but its major characteristic is a simplification of target language forms. With error analysis, linguists have studied various "reduced" registers of language to compare patterns of language reduction and simplification.

II. Language Universals

Just what simplification means has been a subject of considerable debate in the past decade. Its definition and characteristics will be presented later in the chapter. First, it seems helpful to discuss some of the research done in recent years on language forms that has led to universal simplification hypotheses.

From a 1973 study on the order of linguistic acquisition among interlanguages, Heidi Dulay and Marina Burt conclude that common ordering reflects universal cognitive mechanisms. The study is affirmed in their 1980 article, which shows evidence of common second-language acquisition order for certain English structures in adults and in children, in both oral and written communication modes.[18] Meanwhile Ann Fatham similarly finds evidence of a natural order of learning common in first- and second-language learners, and adds that the order of use of structures is determined less by linguistic simplification than by need of self-expression: "Many of the grammatical structures produced at the early stages of language learning are 'simplified' and 'reduced,' but as a learner progresses, he uses more expanded forms which seem to reflect changes in his needs for expression."[19]

Included in language learning studies are pidgins and creoles. According to David DeCamp, a pidgin is a contact vernacular, usually not the native language of any of its speakers. It is used in situations requiring communication between persons who do not speak each other's native languages, such as trading. DeCamp adds that pidgins are characterized by a limited vocabulary, and elimination of many grammatical devices such as number and gender, and a drastic reduction of redundant features.[20] In spite of apparent reduction, however, it is now considered debatable whether the pidgin is simpler or more complex than the standard language. Robert A. Hall, Jr., emphasizes that the motivation in constructing a pidgin is a mutual need for comprehensibility and ease in use, so as to arrive at "a kind of greatest common denominator."[21] William Samarin criticizes Hall for his "narrow view of simplification," and broadens the sense of the term "pidginization." He states that it is not necessarily characterized by reduction or simplification which is "drastic" or "sharp" nor a purely linguistic phenomenon: "Pidginization should be seen as *any consistent reduction of the function of language both in its grammar and its use.*"[22] Evidence from a case study conducted by John Schumann shows that the major factors contributing to pidginization are the speaker's sociological and psychological distance from the target language. Schumann compares second-language acquisition to the process of pidginization, since the former temporarily uses a simple code resembling a pidgin. He proposes that both regress to a set of "universal primitive linguistic categories."[23] To distinguish pidgins from other language registers, it should be recognized that the following socio-linguistic criteria, according to P. Mühlhäusler, influence the degree of simplification in a pidgin: (a) the nature of contact (social disruption, non-intimacy, pressure for communication), (b) illiteracy and second-language learning, and (c) official policy which discourages language learning.[24]

A creole differs in origin and in complexity from a pidgin, since it is the native language spoken by the children and descendants of speakers of a pidgin. DeCamp claims that a creole is not inferior to its corresponding standard language except in social status; its vocabulary and syntactic devices are large enough to meet all the communicative needs of its speakers. "A pidgin, however," continues DeCamp, "is so limited, both lexically and structurally, that it is suitable only for specialized and limited communication."[25]

The development from a pidgin into a creole, because of expanding functional needs of expression, entails language elaboration ("creolization"), although a creole is still seen as "simplified" from the point of view of the standard-language speaker. Albert Valdman describes this two-sided view of creolization in relation to North American French creoles:

> Pour les spécialistes la créolisation est une notion comparative; elle se situe par rapport à un point de référence consistant en une variété réduite, pidginisée de la langue dont est dérivé un créole. Elle suppose donc un processus d'élaboration qui se manifeste par: (a) l'extension des domaines d'emploi; (2) l'extension du lexique et de la structure interne (sémantico-syntaxique); (3) la complexification de la structure de surface. En regard du français standard et des variétés canadiennes et louisianaises du français, le parler des isolats se distinguerait par des traits diamétricalement [sic] opposés à ceux de la créolisation: (1) réduction des domaines d'emploi; (2) réduction du lexique et de la structure interne; (3) simplification de la structure de surface. Ce sont précisément par ces traits que... les langues pidgins se distinguent des idiomes dont elles sont issues, ensemble de traits que constitue la *pidginisation*.[26]

The numerous pidgin-creole stages are sketched by Dell Hymes, who said that within a region there may co-exist more than one or two stages of development: "a pre-pidgin continuum, a crystalized pidgin, a pidgin undergoing de-pidginization (reabsorption by its dominant source), a pidgin undergoing creolization, a creole, a creole undergoing de-creolization."[27]

Schumann proposes the "pidgin-creole continuum" as a basis for a model of the development of learner languages, implying universal language simplification processes, and other studies substantiate this view, showing links among pidginization, creolization and first-language acquisition.[28] Valdman and John Phillips assumed a universal cognitive perspective of language learning in studying the relationship between pidginization and second-language acquisition while, on the other hand, pointing out a contrast in social situations.[29] Schumann indicates in a 1978 article that second-language learning reflects pidginization, but not a pidgin. He explains that the process of pidginization begins when one must learn and use a second language "under conditions of restricted social and psychological contact. These conditions will produce an inter-language that is pidginized in the sense that it is a reduced and simplified form of the target language." At this stage, the withdrawal of the target norm and the intrusion of other native languages would promote the development of a pidgin.[30] It appears, therefore, that various language systems deviate from the standard form in the same way, although their social and psychological environments may differ greatly.

A major impact upon the research of language universals has been the study of certain language "registers." Hall justifies linking the notion of "baby talk" to pidgin formation when he discusses the patterns of contact languages as "stimulus to use a reduced variety of language ('when you're off in those parts, ya gotta talk to the nytives real simple'). The type of simplification used is very often the same as that used by adults in talking to babies or children."[31]

Charles Ferguson discusses baby talk along with "foreigner talk," "deaf talk," "lover's talk," and other forms of speech in a 1971 article dealing with language simplification:

> It may be assumed... that many, perhaps all, speech communities have registers of a special kind for use with people who are regarded... as unable to readily understand the normal speech of the community (e.g. babies, foreigners, deaf people). These forms of speech are generally felt by their users to be simplified versions of the language, hence easier to understand, and they are often regarded as imitation of the way the person addressed uses the language himself.

He added that foreigner talk, if the communication context is appropriate, "may serve as an incipient pidgin and become a more widely used form of speech."[32] Advancing the theory of language universals, Jürgen Meisel opposes Ferguson's view of imitation in a 1977 study of immigrant workers' speech and foreigner talk. He attempted to show that simplification in foreigner talk and in foreign workers' speech is not the product of mutual imitation, but of "similar cognitive processes which manifest themselves in strategies of simplification."[33]

Still another situation exhibiting a "reduced" code is the classroom. "All teaching involves simplification," states Henry Widdowson. "We might say that the teacher adjusts his language behavior in the interests of communication effectiveness."[34] Indeed, Stephen Gaies shows that a second-language teacher adjusts his classroom language syntactically as one does with first-language learners, but he added that this simplification is no less typical of the speech addressed to adult learners in non-instructional situations.[35]

Corder describes baby talk and lover's talk as having an effective function, and foreigner talk, though normally considered a code that native speakers use when addressing foreigners who have little knowledge of the language, as more often a register of ridicule. He referred to the register used by teachers in the classroom as a "contextually modified 'foreigner-talk.'" Deaf talk, Corder continues, is limited in situation by the physical handicap of the listener. Other "reduced" registers mentioned are the language of instructions, technical description and "telegraphese." These forms are used when the medium of transmission is restricted by time, space or money, as with reports, telegrams, label directions, and other communications. Comparing these "reduced" registers with pidgins and finally with the interlanguage of the language learner, Corder claims that all three types use "simple codes," languages which exhibit "strong structural similarities." The most prominent characteristics include a simple or almost non-existent morphological system, a somewhat fixed word order, a simple personal pronoun system, a small number of grammatical function words and grammatical categories, little or no use of the copula, absence of an article system, and syntactic relations based on word order, reducing redundancy. However, each of the three language forms mentioned are different regarding their origin on a "simplification-complication" continuum, according to Corder. "Reduced" register speakers "shift down" to an internal "fossilized" code, simplifying language from a more complex system they already know; pidgin speakers learn the reduced language and thus their language is not simplified except as compared to an outsider who speaks the original standard language; first- and second-language learners do not simplify the target language, but begin with a "simple code" and expand the language complexity in time, although they retain the reduced code throughout their lives. So with the notion of "simple codes" as universal bases of language learning, Corder prefers to abandon the idea of "simplification systems," substituting the notion of complication to refer to the development of a pidgin into a creole, of an interlanguage toward the target language, and of child language into adult language: " 'Simple codes' are 'nearer,' in some sense, to the underlying structure, or 'inner form,' of all languages," whereas the progressive complications are language specific.[36]

III. Notions of Simplification

At this point, it is clear that many language systems are characterized as having simpler forms than their corresponding standard languages, and more than a few researchers have concluded that the cognitive processes responsible for these simple systems are universal in nature. Yet, to arrive at a thorough understanding of simplification and its relevance to language learning, the views of several linguists and pedagogues should be presented. The notion of simplicity is important for several reasons, according to Ferguson, because it is related to theories of language universals, language acquisition and language loss. He adds

that "any full-scale description of a language should identify simple versus complex (i.e. primary versus derivative) along a number of dimensions and thus offer predictions about possible orders of acquisition of the respective features."[37]

Eddy Roulet focuses on the conflict between teacher and student simplification systems:

> De tous temps, quoique avec plus de rigueur ces trente dernières années, les pédagogues se sont efforcés de simplifier le contenu grammatical et lexical des cours pour faciliter l'apprentissage de la langue. Malheureusement, le concept même de simplification est resté très flou et, de surcroît, on s'est peu préoccupé de vérifier si les simplifications effectuées par les pédagogues correspondaient aux stratégies d'apprentissage des élèves.[38]

Jack Richards presented a paper in 1971 which concludes: "Simplification may thus be considered as a universal learning strategy based on the extension or application of rules. Overgeneralization and analogy are instances of the same process." He further explains that the learner proceeds from the rule simplification strategy to "complexification" of linguistic material as he learns.[39] Corder calls this view incorrect, saying, "Simplification might be the *result* of a learning strategy or process, but not a learning strategy itself, although it may be a "strategy of communication." In other words, a speaker may use simplification "in order to communicate effectively, equally no doubt true of native speakers as of interlanguage speakers and more obviously of *teachers* of second language."[40]

The importance of studying language simplification is now obvious, but when a language is broken down into single grammatical parts, it is difficult to perceive what is simple and what is complex. Moreover, as Roulet implied, the actual concept of simplification remains hazy. In a detailed study of simplification as related to pidgins, Mühlhäusler explains that some linguists see language simplification as reduction of one grammar component which takes place at the cost of greater complexity in another component. Mühlhäusler disagrees with this view, assuming that simplification is systematic and rule-governed:

> ... it is conceivable that one natural language is more simple than another — the criterion being the scope of the rules; greater generality of rules and fewer exceptions that are not otherwise motivated can be taken as indication of greater simplicity.[41]

There are at least two kinds of simplification, according to Mühlhäusler, one which invites greater regularity by abolishing exceptions to the rules (overgeneralization), and another which discards redundant grammatical categories, such as gender, number, case, and tense: "It seems likely that there is a correlation between the number of obligatory grammatical categories and the complexity of a language, a complexity that becomes greater the less the grammatical categories are semantically motivated."[42]

Meisel suggests a bidirectional nature in simplification pertaining to second-language acquisition which corresponds somewhat to Mühlhäusler's two types of simplification: One type represents elaboration of the grammatical system, if only resulting in approximation to the correct hypothesis of the target language, which parallels Mühlhäusler's first type. "Restrictive" simplification, which is "almost identical to simplification in a native speaker's simplified register," resembles the latter type suggested by Mühlhäusler in that it serves the purpose of reducing grammatical components.[43] To better illustrate these two divisions of simplification, Rémy Porquier provides the following explanation:

> Parmi les exemples que fournissent les [analyses des erreurs], on trouve deux types de classification:

— omission d'un élément (i.e. simplification de l'énoncé);
— sous-généralisation ou surgénéralisation de règles (i.e. simplification du système de règles de la [langue étrangère]).

Or, l'anglophone qui écrit:

*elles ont mangées de la viande

semble procéder à une "complexification" de l'énoncé (addition superflue de marque morphologique), qui peut provenir d'une surgénéralisation (extension à *avoir* de la règle d'accord avec *être*). Il y aurait simplification de règle mais pas d'énoncé.

Si un non-francophone dit:

*je n'ai pas maison,

on pourra y voir une simplification de l'énoncé (omission de *de*).

Si un autre non-francophone dit:

*je n'ai pas de l'argent (au lieu de *je n'ai pas d'argent*),

on y trouvera peut-être une "complexification" par addition de *l'*, ou une surgénéralisation par analogie avec *j'ai de l'argent* (et donc simplification).[44]

To summarize, Mühlhäusler hypothesizes that any simplification is intended to introduce more regularity into the language. Therefore, the simplification process in pidgins and creoles is not basically different from the simplifying processes that characterize development of a child's speech or the historical development of languages: "The difference is one of degree..."[45] Derek Bickerton referred to such simplifying processes as a "human *faculté de langage*," based on internalized linguistic rules.[46]

In his study of "reduced" languages, Widdowson concludes that errors are the result of a learner's attempt to convert his linguistic knowledge into communicative use. Given that the languages discussed so far exhibit characteristics which appear simplified in comparison to standard languages, and that errors occur as a result of certain psychological processes, Widdowson proposes an answer to why these processes take place: "The learner attempts to adjust the language he is learning to make it an effective instrument of communication and he does so by calling upon those strategies which he employs in the use of his own language."[47] Therefore, simplification is seen as a process used to heighten communication, even if it involves deviance from a standard language form.

IV. *Français Populaire, Français Avancé* and Simplification

One language form often characterized by simplification not yet discussed in this chapter is the *langue populaire*, a sociolinguistic term which refers to the language spoken by the people of a certain social class — the "commoners," the "working class," "*le bas peuple*" — whose speaking habits show little influence from education or more formal language styles. This study will focus on *français populaire*, although such levels most likely exist in virtually all languages.

Français populaire (FP) should be distinguished from slang, spoken language and colloquial French. It is not slang, but slang characteristically accounts for a large source of the FP lexicon. Although FP is commonly considered a language restricted to oral communication, it is not equivalent to the *langue parlée*, because the latter is used by people of all social levels. In terms of deviance from the language norm, however, both forms share many of the same features. Denise François explains that there exist:

... des convergences dans le domaine de l'idiome 'parlé' par les différentes couches sociales, convergences qui s'expliquent par les nécessités d'évolution structurale de la

> langue ... la dynamique des langues dans leur usage le plus fondamental, à savoir la communication orale, n'est pas l'apanage des niveaux de langue '*populaires*' ... elle affecte, elle ne peut qu'affecter tous les usages oraux du langage ... Si l'on doit souligner les convergences des usages oraux ... convergences dues essentiellement, répétons-le, aux besoins de l'économie linguistique dans la communication orale — des divergences apparaissent dans le maniement des unités linguistiques selon leur apprivoisement qui est facteur des modes d'acquisition.[48]

Finally, *français populaire* should not be confused with *français familier* or colloquial French, although, again, many traits of the "*parlure vulgaire*" are found in colloquial French. Colloquial use refers to familiar conversation, at all social levels, or as Thérèse Bonin states, "simply an informal use of the language which implies the parity of the social status of the speakers and the spontaneity of their speech."[49] The difference between the two forms is that colloquial language is normally classified within the boundaries of *bon usage*, while *langue populaire* is not. A common observation, however, is the gradual disappearance of class barriers and of the corresponding social levels of language. Pierre Guiraud associates this phenomenon with greater access of the working class to culture through education and news media, and with the fact that "bourgeois" members are accepting and adopting more and more argot from *français populaire*.

The norm with which FP is often compared is called *français soigné*, *français soutenu* or *français cultivé*. This norm originated during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when the natural structure of the system had not yet completely evolved. Grammarians stabilized the grammar while the language was still in a period of transition. Therefore according to Guiraud, formal French now possesses these principal elements:

> — la formation d'une langue savante, artificiellement tirée du latin et qui n'a jamais été entièrement intégrée au fonds héréditaire;
> — la normalisation et la stabilisation de l'idiome; sans doute prématurées et souvent arbitraires, qui en ont infléchi et ralenti le développement naturel;
> — l'importance accordée à l'enseignement de la langue; d'où une acuité — sans doute unique — de la conscience grammaticale et étymologique, et une soumission à la règle et à l'autorité des auteurs;
> — la place de la logique et de la rhétorique dans un rationalisme qui vise à une analyse minutieuse, précise et *claire* de la pensée et de son expression.[50]

Guiraud goes on to say that, were it liberated from the obstacles of the rule and left to its natural functions, the idiom would have eliminated most of the irregular forms imposed by the norm — which is precisely what FP does. The formal language is defined by rules derived in retrospect from traditional grammars, while the French of the people only submits to natural linguistic laws of simplification:

> Livrée à elle-même la langue tend à une simplification du système par l'élimination des formes parasitaires et, à la longue, par celle des paradigmes secondaires. Il y a donc une économie de la langue, fondée sur les besoins de la communication, et qui en règle naturellement l'évolution dans le sens d'une structure plus simple et plus cohérente.[51]

Henri Frei also entertained the idea of rule versus law: "La règle grammaticale n'a rien de commun avec la loi linguistique; la première est conventionnelle... la seconde naturelle..."[52]

Again, ambiguous aspects of simplification come into play because many deviant features attributed to FP appear confusing and complex. The use of formal vocabulary often causes distortion or misuse of words, and hypercorrections, or overgeneralizations, occur as one applies irregular rules to regular formations. For example, one might carry the rule of past participle agreement to an extreme, producing **je lui ai écrite cette lettre*. Such errors result when linguistic laws conflict with grammatical rules. Henri Bauche hypothesizes language development without the restrictions and confusion of redundant rules:

> Si l'on pouvait placer en une île déserte quelques couples illettrés parlant purement le français populaire et laisser leurs descendants pendant plusieurs générations à l'abri de toute influence extérieure et de tout texte écrit, la langue qui se constituerait serait une langue qui aurait sa valeur et sa beauté et ses règles exactement comme une autre.[53]

Thus Bauche theorizes, albeit indirectly, the existence of a universal process of language development that is systematic and geared toward regularity and economy, evolving towards a simpler grammar. Did Bauche realize that this theory had, in a way, been put to the test on islands all over the world?

By comparing various isolated francophone areas, creolists have recently shown evidence that the language taught to the natives in the years of their colonization was not standard, but old popular French.[54] Robert Chaudenson explains that because the language was learned quickly (as a pidgin) and since there was an absence of a standard norm in the form of schools or a prestigious social group, the creole evolved quickly: "Les tendances fondamentales de la langue populaire (brièveté, expressivité, invariabilité), affranchies de la contrainte de la norme qui, à la même époque, pesait si lourdement sur le français de France, furent alors poussées à l'extrême." Thus the new language preserved many dialectal features of the old popular French, while promoting its evolutionary tendencies to bring about a new, simplified system which formed the fundamental structures of a creole.[55] In 1979, Chaudenson mentioned that developmental tendencies of FP could be compared, not only with creoles, but also with the acquisition of French by children.[56]

The historical view of the language shows that forms of *français populaire* are more enduring than those of *français soigné*. Walther von Wartburg described the process of *français avancé* in his discussion of regional and social language differentiations:

> Ces différentes nuances de français nous permettent de prévoir dans quelle direction marchera la langue. Les tendances d'évolution viennent tantôt d'en bas, tantôt d'en haut. Or, il est remarquable que le français populaire semble être guidé par le même instinct qui préside à l'évolution de la langue depuis des siècles.[57]

Henri Frei first used the term *français avancé* to denote "tout ce qui détonne par rapport à la langue traditionnelle: fautes, innovations, langage populaire, argot, cas insolites ou litigieux, perplexités grammaticales, etc." He introduced the functional role of language errors in general as indicators of linguistic needs.[58]

In a recent historical study of *français avancé*, Georg Steinmeyer warns against comparing sixteenth and seventeenth century FP with the modern idiom if social distinctions are to be considered, because class differentiations in France have changed greatly in four hundred years. But in a primarily linguistic scope, Steinmeyer sees a whole series of cases where similar "popular" forms have appeared again and again throughout the centuries.[59]

The works already mentioned by Bauche, Frei, Guiraud and Steinmeyer present, in their individual ways, characteristics of FP from the aspect of simplification of, or deviances from, the standard form. Bauche organizes his book, *Le langage populaire*, by grammatical categories, such as gender, number, substantive, verb, and so on, with special chapters on word formation, pronunciation and other language aspects. A special feature of this work is his "Dictionnaire du langage populaire parisien." Frei presents *La grammaire des fautes* divided into chapters according to "needs" indicated by common errors in French: the need of assimilation (through analogy and conformism), the need of differentiation (clarity), the need of brevity, the need of invariability (shown by semantic and syntactic transposition), and the need of expressivity (including slang). Using Bauche's and Frei's works as sources, Guiraud organizes *Le français populaire* according to (1) analogical reduction of irregular forms, (2) laws of French and structuring of the hereditary system, (3) norm and system,

(4) expressivity, and (5) pronunciation. Finally, dividing characteristics into phonetic and morphosyntactic categories, Steinmeyer compares modern FP with earlier-known forms dating back to the sixteenth century, including regional dialects, showing the natural developmental tendencies of the language.

Although their classification systems are different, these four linguists show in general the same characteristics of FP. Since it is by nature a language restricted to the spoken mode, pronunciation features stand out as a major mark of this idiom; yet much of what distinguished FP from other speech styles during the days of Bauche's research are now already accepted at all conversational social levels — a sign of *français avancé* at work. The distinction of the popular language is often one of degree. For example, liaisons have almost disappeared in FP except for those which mark plurals or gender, although Bauche also found false liaisons denoting overgeneralization: *peu z à peu, il faudra t aller.*[60] Pronunciation features usually represent reduction or ellipsis of certain sounds, such as *t'as* for *tu as* (B, 98), or confusion of a phonetic element, such as metathesis, whereby *hypnotisme* becomes *hynoptisme* (B, 57).

In "popular" thought, says Guiraud, things are very large or very small, very good or very bad; affirmation, negation and order are expressed emphatically. In order to add emphasis to an idea, one uses hyperbole, redundancy, pleonasm, parasitic derivations or figures of speech, all characterizing the intensity and affectivity of FP (G, 83). Such forms of expressivity may be represented by using words in a redundant or exaggerating manner: *c'est la vérité vraie, sûr et certain, une petite maisonnette, erreur involontaire, très très beau, excessivement beau* (G, 88-89); or by the addition of expressive prefixes or suffixes: *malpoli, décesser, grognasse, négrillot* (B, 59-60). Slang, which is a characteristic phenomenon of FP expressivity, includes such non-standard word formations and uses. However, as stated earlier, it is important to refrain from equating slang with FP, since slang pertains only to vocabulary, and *langue populaire* indicates deviance from standard pronunciation, morphological forms, and syntax as well as vocabulary.[61]

A classic tendency of FP simplification is adapting irregular or "unnatural" formations to regular rules. Some examples of this tendency are: keeping the plural partitive article before adjectives preceding a noun (*des petits enfants, des belles femmes*; B, 79), regularizing plurals (*des journals, des oeils*; F, 207), modifying second- and third-conjugaison verbs toward the regular *-er* verb pattern (*romper les rangs, agoniser de sottises*; G, 21), and deletion of the subjunctive mood (*Sans qu'on sait pourquoi, pour que j'ai une réponse*; F, 199-200).

Though generally used less frequently, hypercorrections, or overgeneralizations, also characterize the FP simplification process by the application of irregular rules to regular formations. Confusion about exceptional uses in formal French combined with the tendency to stabilize grammar patterns results in errors such as: hypercorrection of a negative (*N'ayant pas encore rien reçu, personne ne veut pas ça*; F, 59), overgeneralizing past participle agreement (*je me suis faite un chapeau*, G, 36; *vos démarches vous auront coûtées*, F, 56), overuse of the subjunctive (*je suppose qu'il soit prisonnier, tous les renseignements que je puisse vous donner*; F, 58), and agreement of adverbs (*C'est elle qui est la mieux habillée, c'est eux qui sont venus les plus tôt*; B, 122).

Also typical of FP are grammatical transformations (*je suis enthousiasme*; B, 72), ellipses of elements (*Regrette, n'ai plus*, F, 122; *Tu veux je vienne?* , B, 124), shifts in word meanings (*Je vous promets qu'il est là* for *je vous assure...*; G, 69), and many syntactic and morphological simplifications.

Thus, like reduced registers, pidgins and creoles, and stages in first- and second-language learning, FP shows patterns of language simplification. Being the native language of its speakers, it resembles a creole. Like pidgins and creoles, it carries a mark of social inferiority. FP may be compared with "baby talk" or other reduced registers from the

standpoint that one may often shift form the standard norm to the "simpler" form according to the situation. Yet the origin of FP, combined with its widespread use and its tenacity throughout history, separate it from other language systems. In this study, similarities will be shown between FP simplification and that of the second-language learner. The following chapter will explain the method used to identify and compare simplification processes of the two language systems.

NOTES

[6] S. Pit Corder, "The Significance of Learner's Errors," *IRAL*, 5 (1967), 161-70; rpt. "The Significance of Learners' Errors," in *New Frontiers in Second Language Learning*, ed. John Schumann and Nancy Stenson (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1975), p. 96.

[7] Corder, p. 95 In the discussion hereafter, an "error" will refer to a systematic, or competency-based, elicitation, and a "mistake" will denote an unsystematic, or performance-based, elicitation.

[8] Larry Selinker, "Language Transfer," *General Linguistics*, 9 (1969), 71.

[9] Selinker, "Interlanguage," *IRAL*, 10 (1972), 219-31; rpt. in *New Frontiers in Second Language Learning*, pp. 118-19; 131.

[10] William Nemser, "Approximative Systems of Foreign Language Learners," *IRAL*, 9 (1971), 115-23; rpt. in *Error Analysis: Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*, ed. Jack C. Richards, Applied Linguistics and Language Study (London: Longman, 1974), p. 55.

[11] Nemser, p. 57.

[12] See Christian Adjemian, "On the Nature of Interlanguage Systems," *Language Learning*, 26 (1976), 308; and Elaine Tarone, "Interlanguage as Chameleon," *Language Learning*, 29 (1979) 184-85.

[13] Robert Lado, *Linguistics Across Cultures* (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Mich. Press, 1957), p. vii.

[14] See Tran-Thi-Chau, "Error Analysis, Contrastive Analysis, and Students' Perception," *IRAL*, 13 (1975), 133; Jean-Pierre Berwald, "Correcting Errors Made by French-Canadian Learners of English," *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 35 (1978), 180-81; Marina K. Burt, "Error Analysis in the Adult EFL Classroom," *TESOL Quarterly*, 9 (1975), 54; and Patricia B. Powell, "Moi Tarzan, vous Jane? ," *Foreign Language Annals*, 8 (1975), 39-40.

[15] Faith Ann Johansson, "Multiple Contact Analysis," in *Errata: Papers in Error Analysis*, ed. Jan Svartvik (Lund, Sweden: CWK Gleerup, 1973), pp. 48-49.

[16] Otto Jespersen, *Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1922), pp. 233-34.

[17] Corder, "Language Continua and the Interlanguage Hypothesis," in *The Notions of Simplification, Interlanguages and Pidgins and their Relation to Second Language Pedagogy*, ed. S. Pit Corder and Eddy Roulet, Université de Neufchâtel, Recueil de travaux, 35 (Neufchâtel: Faculté des lettres, 1977 and Geneva: Droz, 1977), p. 13.

[18] See Heidi C. Dulay and Marina K. Burt, "Should We Teach Children Syntax? ," *Language Learning*, 23 (1973), 249; and Burt and Dulay, "On Acquisition Orders," in *Second Language Development: Trends and Issues*, ed. Sascha W. Felix, Tübinger Beitrage zur Linguistik, 125 (Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 1980), p. 325.

[19] Ann Fathman, "Similarities and Simplification in the Interlanguage of Second Language Learners," in *The Notions of Simplification, Interlanguages and Pidgins and their Relation to Second Language Pedagogy*, p. 36.

[20] David DeCamp, "Introduction: The Study of Pidgin and Creole Languages," in *Pidginization and Creolization of Languages*, ed. Dell Hymes (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1971), p. 15. For a detailed discussion of redundancy, see H.V. George, *Common Errors in*

Language Learning (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1972), pp. 85-142; and Joanne Kalnitz, *Universals in Second Language Acquisition*, Papers in Linguistics, 1974-77: A Collection of M.A. Papers from Students in the Linguistics Dept. of Northwestern Illinois Univ. (Chicago: Northwestern Ill. Univ., 1978), pp. 91-92 (ERIC ED 161 290). For discussion of simplification in vocabulary, see E.A. Levenston and Shoshana Blum, "Aspects of Lexical Simplification in the Speech of Advanced Adult Learners," in *The Notions of Simplification, Interlanguages and Pidgins and their Relation to Second Language Pedagogy*, pp. 51-71; and Blum and Levenston, "Universals of Lexical Simplification," *Language Learning*, 28 (1978), 399-415.

[21] Robert A. Hall, Jr., *Pidgin and Creole Languages* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1966), p. 25.

[22] William J. Samarin, "Salient and Substantive Pidginization," in *Pidginization and Creolization of Languages*, p. 126.

[23] John H. Schumann, *The Pidginization Process*, Series in Sociolinguistics, ed. Roger W. Shuy (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1978), pp. 70, 115.

[24] P. Mühlhäusler, *Pidginization and Simplification of Language*, Pacific Linguistics: Monograph Series B, 26, ed. S.A. Wurm (Canberra: Australian Nat'l. Univ., 1974). p. 60.

[25] DeCamp, p. 16.

[26] Albert Valdman, "Créolisation, français populaire et le parler des isolats francophones d'Amérique du Nord," in *Le français hors de la France*, ed. Albert Valdman (Paris: Champion, 1979), pp. 186-87.

[27] Dell Hymes, ed., Introd., *Pidginization and Creolization of Languages* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1971), p. 78.

[28] See Schumann, "The Implications of Interlanguage, Pidginization and Creolization for the Study of Adult Second Language Acquisition," *TESOL Quarterly*, 8 (1974), 145-52; rpt. "Implications of Pidginization and Creolization for the Study of Adult Second Language Acquisition," in *New Frontiers in Second Language Learning*, p. 139; Paul Kay and Gillian Sankoff, "A Language-Universals Approach to Pidgins and Creoles," in *Pidgins and Creoles: Current Trends and Prospects*, ed. David DeCamp and Ian F. Hancock (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown Univ. Press, 1974), pp. 61-72; and Elizabeth Closs Traugott, "Some Thoughts on Natural Syntactic Processes," in *New Ways of Analyzing Variation in English*, ed. Charles-James N. Bailey and Roger W. Shuy (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown Univ. Press, 1973), pp. 313-22.

[29] Albert Valdman and John S. Phillips, "Pidginization, Creolization and the Elaboration of Learner Systems," *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 1, No. 1 (1978), 21-23. For a similar study, see William C. Flick and Glenn G. Gilbert, *Second Language Learning vs. Pidginization*, TESOL Convention, New York, 9 Mar. 1976 (ERIC ED 134 038).

[30] Schumann, "The Relationship of Pidginization, Creolization and Decreolization to Second Language Acquisition," *Language Learning*, 28 (1978), 372.

[31] Hall, "Pidgins, Language-Learning, and Culture-Contact," *Journal of Creole Studies*, 1 (1977), 30.

[32] Charles A. Ferguson, "Absence of Copula and the Notion of Simplicity," in *Pidginization and Creolization of Languages*, pp. 143-44.

[33] Jürgen M. Meisel, "Linguistic Simplification: A Study of Immigrant Workers' Speech and Foreigner Talk," in *Notions of Simplification, Interlanguages and Pidgins and their Relation to Second Language Pedagogy*, p. 108.

[34] Henry G. Widdowson, "The Significance of Simplification," *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 1, No. 1 (1978), 19.

[35] Stephen Gaies, "Linguistic Input in First and Second Language Learning," in *Studies in First and Second Language Acquisition*, ed. Fred Eckman and Ashley J. Hastings (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1979), p. 191.

[36] Corder, " 'Simple Codes' and the Source of the Second Language Learner's Initial Heuristic Hypothesis," *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 1, No. 1 (1978), 1-8. Ferguson and Charles DeBose also showed similarities of reduced registers and interlanguage ("broken language") in "Simplified Registers, Broken Language, and Pidginization," in *Pidgin and Creole Linguistics*, ed. Albert Valdman (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana Univ. Press, 1977), pp. 99-125.

[37] Ferguson, p. 145.

[38] Eddy Roulet, Pref., *The Notions of Simplification, Interlanguages and Pidgins and their Relation to Second Language Pedagogy*, p. 7.

[39] Jack C. Richards, "Simplification: A Strategy in the Adult Acquisition of a Foreign Language," *Language Learning*, 25 (1975), 118-125.

[40] Corder, "Language Continua and the Interlanguage Hypothesis," p. 12.

[41] Mühlhäusler, p. 71.

[42] Mühlhäusler, pp. 88-89.

[43] Meisel, p. 111.

[44] Rémy Porquier, "Analyse des erreurs: problèmes et perspectives," *Etudes de linguistique appliquée*, 25 (1977), 33. The asterisks used in this citation and later in the text indicate hypothetical spoken or written expressions.

[45] Mühlhäusler, p. 109. A brief discussion of simplification in historical development will appear in Section IV.

[46] Derek Bickerton, "Pidginization and Creolization: Language Acquisition and Language Universals," in *Pidgin and Creole Linguistics*, p. 64.

[47] Widdowson, p. 16.

[48] Denise François, "Français parlé ou français populaire," *Ethnologie française*, No. 3-4 (1973), p. 268.

[49] Thérèse M. Bonin, "The Role of Colloquial French in Communication and Implications for Language Instruction," *Modern Language Journal*, 62 (1978), p. 95.

[50] Pierre Guiraud, *Le français populaire*, 4e ed., Que sais-je? , 1172 (Paris: PUF, 1978), pp. 10-11.

[51] Guiraud, pp. 12, 15-17.

[52] Henri Frei, *La grammaire des fautes* (1929; rpt. Geneva: Slatkine, 1971), p. 24.

[53] Henri Bauche, *Le langage populaire*, 4e ed. (1928; rpt. Paris: Payot, 1951), p. 14.

[54] See Valdman, "Creolisation, français populaire et le parler des isolats francophones d'Amérique du Nord," pp. 194-96, which refers to Atlantic creoles formed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and Robert Chaudenson, "Pour une étude comparée des créoles et parlers français d'outre-mer," *Revue de linguistique romane*, 37 (1973), 344-45, which discusses other creoles, which were developed in later centuries.

[55] See Chaudenson, "Les parlers créoles et l'enseignement du français," *Le français dans le monde*, No. 146 (1979), p. 15; and Chaudenson, "Pour une étude comparée des créoles et parlers français d'outre-mer," pp. 344-45.

[56] Chaudenson, "Les parlers créoles et l'enseignement du français," p. 15.

[57] Walther von Wartburg, *Evolution et structure de la langue française*, 5th ed. (Bern: Francke, 1958), p. 271.

[58] Frei, p. 32.

[59] Georg Steinmeyer, *Historische Aspekte des français avancé*, Kölner Romanistische Arbeiten, 56 (Geneva: Droz, 1979), pp. 248-49.

[60] Bauche, p. 53. Further references to this work will be presented in the text as (B), with the page number included in the parentheses. Frei will likewise be documented by (F), Guiraud by (G) and Steinmeyer by (S).

[61] See von Wartburg, p. 270; and François, "Les argots," in *Le langage*, ed. André Martinet, Encyclopédie de la Pléiade, 25 (Paris: Gallimard, 1968), p. 627.

CHAPTER TWO:
METHODOLOGY

As the previous chapter indicates, many language systems are often distinguishable by grammatical elements which are simplified in comparison to a corresponding standard or target language. The aim of this study is to compare the aspects of reduction in *français populaire* and in the French interlanguage of a group of American students in order to show the presence or absence of common communication strategies. This chapter will explain the procedure used to compare the two systems. Results will not be statistical; the exact frequency of errors does not play an important role in this study. Due to the nature of the analysis, conclusions will be drawn from examples present in the student essays which resemble examples of FP.

I. Materials Used for Analysis

Examples of simplification in second-language (L_2) acquisition were gathered from one hundred written compositions collected randomly from University of Georgia undergraduate French classes, levels 103, 104, 210, 211, 306 and 312. Students in these classes have normally received from one half to three years of formal university instruction in French. Each course lasts one academic quarter (ten weeks) and classes meet for fifty minutes a day, five days a week. Below is a table listing the specifications for each of the six courses.

	Course Title	Description
103	*Intermediate French* Prerequisite: French 101, 102	Continuation of grammar and cultural study; reading works of moderate difficulty; oral work in class; one hour per week in language laboratory required.
104	*Intermediate French* Prerequisite: French 103	Reading of texts of marked literary value; grammar review, cultural study, pronunciation and conversation.
210	*Conversation and Composition*[a] Prerequisite: French 104	Emphasis on promoting student's ability to express himself accurately in spoken and written French.
211	*Critical Reading of French Literature* Prerequisite: French 104	Introduction to critical reading and interpretation of representative French literary masterpieces in various genres.
306	*French Conversation and Composition* Prerequisite: French 210	Additional practice in conversation and composition beyond French 210.
312	*French Literature from 1848 to the Present* Prerequisite: French 211	Reading and analysis of representative French literary works from 1848 to the present.

Source: *The University of Georgia Bulletin 1979-81: Undergraduate Study*, 77, No. 2 (June 1979), 167-68.

[a]The courses numbered 210 and above count as major and minor French courses.

This intermediate level seems appropriate because the students should be advanced enough to be acquainted with the major grammatical points used in the study, and to express themselves freely, while still in a developmental stage between their native language (L_1) and the target norm. Such a level therefore seems to best fit the description of an interlanguage or an "approximative system" discussed in the first chapter.

The 200- and 300-level compositions average about three hand-written pages in length, while papers from the 100-level courses average about one page each. Thus, to achieve a balance of length among these stages of L_2 learning, thirty compositions from both 103 and 104 levels were used, and ten were used from each of the four upper-level courses. The content of the essays includes a variety of topics as assigned by the class instructors. The range of topics provides the use of various tenses and modes by the students.

The ideal material for research is language used in its true form — as self-expression and communication — with enough data to show patterns of language manipulation in all parts of speech. Some researchers suggest that "spontaneous" speech, or vernacular, is the most systematic language style and the least permeable to native interference.[62] However, as William Labov points out with the "Observer's Paradox (*das Beobachterparadoxon*)," the conditions required for significant well-recorded data — with mistakes which contribute nothing to the understanding of language simplification. In addition, some errors marking simplification are not easily, if at all, detectable in speech, such as past participle agreement with a preceding direct object: **les villes que j'ai visité*. Therefore the benefits of working with written samples (and the impracticality of gathering recorded data for this research) make the use of personal compositions a logical choice.

The simplification characteristics typical of FP will be taken from the best available sources on that idiom, namely the works already mentioned by Bauche, Frei, Guiraud and Steinmeyer. Actually, only Bauche and Frei present primary data for modern FP. Bauche assembled his samples not from texts or from recordings, but from what he heard in the street, in the army, in factories and shops, in third-class train compartments, in the "*quartiers populaires de Paris*," and also from letters he collected written by "*des gens du peuple*" (B, 29). Frei based much of his work on letters he procured from *l'Agence des prisonniers de guerre (Comité International de la Croix-Rouge)* in Geneva, and on examples of FP listed in other grammar studies, including Bauche's. The books by Guiraud and by Steinmeyer are both important because of their special points of view and methods of organizing the material.

A general group of FP characteristics emerge after studying the presentations by the various linguists. The numerous characteristics of simplification found were divided into grammatical and syntactic groups based on Bauche's classification system. Each feature was then assigned a number for identification. Characteristic FP slang and pronunciation features were not considered in this study, since they do not involve simplification of grammar. With the numbered FP deviances as a basis for comparison, errors in the students' compositions were analyzed and marked with a number when they corresponded to FP simplifications. For cross-reference, cards were labeled for each of the FP characteristics and corresponding student errors were listed on the cards, each error recorded with its composition number. Thus any simplification traits which are common to both language systems appear. Errors apparently due to L_1 interference and not to any simplification process were marked but not recorded. The procedure for analysis of the errors showing simplification is discussed below.

II. Classification of Errors

The psychological cause of an L_2 error is never certain unless the researcher can ask the learner his reasons for the erroneous use. Otherwise, the researcher must infer the logistics, if they exist, behind an error. The recent research in error analysis generally brings out two

major sources of errors in L_2 acquisition, which have already been discussed at some length in this report: L_1 interference, where the learner "makes up the deficiencies of his knowledge of the second language by recourse to the appropriate parts of the mother tongue,"[64] and target rule simplification, or "developmental errors," where the learner is " 'reconstructing' the new language independently of his knowledge of the structures of his first language."[65]

The target language is reduced to a simpler system by generalizations, explains M. P. Jain, "which are very often restricted in nature, and thus carry within them potential errors through over-application of these generalizations." Jain continues to say that distinctions between interlingual and intralingual errors are not always clear: "...the phenomenon of errors caused by the cross-association of both L_1 and L_2 also seems to exist..."[66] Corder, too, admits that "...in very many cases there appear to be several simultaneous processes going on."[67]

By ranking errors on a continuous five-part scale, Paul Robberecht creates a more precise classification method:

(1) "pure" interference, which includes errors apparently caused only from literal L_1 translations,
(2) literal translations that could be explained as overgeneralizations,
(3) errors that are superficially overgeneralizations, but may covertly involve interference,
(4) "pure" overgeneralization or analogy, and
(5) guessing."[68]

Since this study concentrates on the intralingual simplification system, errors in categories (1) and (5) are not included in the data analysis. The analysis in fact entails dividing errors into only two classes: intra-lingual simplification (Robberecht's category (4)), and a combination of simplification and interference (categories (2) and (3)). In other words, among the errors that resemble FP simplification traits, those which also seem to exhibit L_1 interference are placed in a second category to better identify the causes of the errors. Of course, some examples of simplification occur in the student compositions which are not typical of FP (e.g. "*La connaissance de cettes liaisons...*") and some traits of FP were not found in the student compositions (e.g. substituting *passé surcomposé* for *passé simple: "J'en ai eu mangé"* F, 79). It would be impossible to understand the psychological motives behind every student error. Psycholinguistic assumptions are therefore limited to classifying errors into the two classes mentioned.

III. Limitations of the Study

This study is limited in its number of student samples and in its scope of grammatical coverage. Also, the examples of FP are not taken from current-day speech, although the FP sources seem to be the best available. Bauche's work was originally written in 1928 and updated in 1951. Frei's was published in 1929. The only confirmation of the continued "popular" usage lies in the fact that Guiraud cited many of the earlier examples as typical of modern usage — an indirect verification.

Another limitation of the analysis stems from the lack of statistics drawn from the data. Empirical in nature, this study sacrifices statistical proof (which would require unnatural interviewing or testing) in order to conserve the highest level of free expression in the available samples of student interlanguage. Conclusions, as mentioned before, are drawn from lists of data showing common simplification strategies in FP and in interlanguage.

Comparing written language with language normally reserved for conversation seems to be the major limitation of this study. The comparison involves two different kinds of language forms, one based on social parameters, the other representing a stage in a language learning process. The use of a written (formal) style will possibly produce fewer examples of

simplification which can be compared with FP since the research discussed above shows that a formal register produces more evidence of L_1 interference. However, if links between the two systems exist in spite of the difference of register, then this preliminary study may offer a starting point for more technical research in universal language simplification processes.

NOTES

[62] See Elaine Tarone, "Interlanguage as Chameleon," *Language Learning*, 29 (1979), 184-85. Tarone's hypothesis is based on a paper by Sascha Felix, "How Reliable are Experimental Data?," TESOL Convention, Miami, Fla., 27-30 Apr., 1977, and on a dissertation by Elizabeth Gatbonton, "Systematic Variations in Second Language Speech: A Sociolinguistic Study," Diss. McGill Univ., 1975.

[63] William Labov, *Sprache im socialen Kontext*, II, ed. Norbert Dittmar and Bert-Olaf Rieck, Monographien Linguistik und Kommunikationswissenschaft, 23 (Königstein/Ts., Ger.: Scriptor-Verlag, 1978), 200-201.

[64] S. Pit Corder, *Introducing Applied Linguistics* (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin, 1973), p. 284.

[65] Heidi C. Dulay and Marina K. Burt, "Should We Teach Children Syntax?." *Language Learning*, 23 (1973), 247.

[66] M. P. Jain, "Error Analysis: Source, Cause and Significance," in *Error Analysis: Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*, ed. Jack C. Richards (London: Longman, 1974), pp. 190-91.

[67] Corder, p. 290.

[68] Paul Robberecht, "Error Analysis: Some Problems of Classification," in *Sprachstruktur, Individuum und Gesellschaft*, Acten des 13. Linguistischen Kolloquiums, Gent, 1978, I, ed. Marc Van de Velde and Willy Vandeweghe, Linguistische Arbeiten, 76 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1979), 342-45.

CHAPTER THREE:
ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The organization of this analysis follows the outline of the grammatical traits of *français populaire*. Based on Bauche's classification, each FP characteristic (outside of pronunciation and slang) showing evidence of simplification falls under one of the following categories: general morphology and syntax, articles, substantives, adjectives, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, and prepositions. Each characteristic appears under only one category, although some could easily belong to more than one. Several FP traits in the morphology and syntax category, however, are so general that similar, but more specific, characteristics appear in subsequent categories. In such cases, a note will accompany the general description referring to the more specific examples.

Each FP characteristic will be presented with a short description, if necessary, and examples in FP from the works of Bauche (B), Frei (F), Guiraud (G), or Steinmeyer (S). Reference to each source will include the page numbers of the source in which an example was found. Then, some corresponding examples of the interlanguage system found in the student compositions will be shown, divided into two classifications: (1) deviances showing a possible combination of native-language interference and simplification and (2) deviances showing patterns of simplification alone, including overgeneralization and language reduction. Errors are assumed to be caused by interference when the word-for-word translation to English corresponds directly. When a correct form of the language is needed to explain an error, the symbols (>), (<) and (=) may be used to denote "becomes," "comes from" and "is equivalent to," respectively. Examples will be presented as found in the student compositions, so that some extraneous errors or mistakes will appear which have nothing to do with the grammar characteristic in question. Each example from the compositions will begin with the student's course number (103, 104, 210, 211, 306, 312) to indicate the interlanguage level on which the error occurred. Brief commentaries on the data will follow the list of examples if necessary. Again it should be emphasized that any psycholinguistic motive behind a student's error is assumed only according to its resemblance to FP simplifications and to that student's native language.

I. General Morphology and Syntax

A. Redundancy. This category includes tautologies, pleonasm, and unnecessary emphasis. Some examples from FP are: *sain et sauf, achever complètement, excessivement beau, aussi par exemple* (G, 88-90). Below are some samples of the same phenomena from students of French.

Simplification + Interference

103 -*très* beaucoup
-*D'habitude*, j'avais sommeil trop tôt *tous les soirs*
-C'est *très* unique!
104 -les *gens* étrangeres
211 -il est *très* evident
306 -vraiment, *vraiment, vraiment* désespéré

Simplification

103 -aller *a la maison chez moi*
210 -du bon *bon* vins
306 -comme "*stupide*" or "*bête*"
-*arbre de* chêne
-ce qu'ils pensent *dans la tête*

Classifying the examples of this section is difficult since most of the samples from the first division could represent the literal translation of L_1 sentences which are already redundant. In any case, expressivity in both language forms is apparent.

B. Transposition of grammatical type: *Je suis enthousiasme* (B, 72); *Cela m'indiffère* (F, 46). See also VII.B. of this chapter.

Simplification + Interference

103 -il a payé me très *bon* (adjective > adverb)
-je *travaillé* (past participle > verb)
104 -un *mal* professeur (adverb > adjective)
210 -*le manquant* de quelque chose (present participle > noun)
211 -faire les choses *bon* (adj. > adv.)
306 -*depuis* j'étais (preposition > conjunction)
-la danse est la *seulement* façon (adv. > adj.)
312 -*parce que* des barrières (conjunction > preposition)
-une vie *mieux* que l'autre (adv. > adj.)

Simplification

103 -j'ai *peinture* deux portraits (noun > past participle)
104 -en *vraie* (adj. > noun "vérité")
211 -Thésée represente l'*autoritaire* (adj. > noun)
306 -il *étude* ça (noun > verb)

C. Semantic analogy or "popular" etymology. A characteristic similar to grammatical transposition, semantic analogy entails forming words or using them in a deviant manner, based on ignorance of that word's etymology and its primary meaning. Frei describes the process as "l'interprétation nouvelle donnée à un signe simple ou à un syntagme d'après le modèle d'un autre signe ou d'un autre syntagme prédominants dans la conscience linguistique..." (F, 44): *Je suis très patriotique < un homme patriote + un discours patriotique* (B, 211 and F, 144); *Je vous promets qu'il s'est bien amusé < Je vous assure...* (F, 237); *grâce à cet échec* (F, 140).

Simplification + Interference

103 -La *cité* [New York] est tellement grande
104 -ils auront *information*
210 -je vais *l'envoyer* chez le président ("send him")
-leurs *futurs*
306 -l'avidité des étudiants *réfléchit* l'enthousiasme du professeur
-il faut être très *dédié* à la vie
-les photos *nues*
-pris ma *photographe*

Simplification

103 -tous les *genres* de gens
-donner la *cuisine* a la beoufs [sic]
210 -pays *étrange* ("étranger")
-les *régions* de Paris

312 -un sens *littéraire* ("précis, propre")
-ses responsabilités *mondiales* ("mondaines")

D. Ellipsis of words: *Regrette, n'ai plus, Tu veux je vienne? Près le pont* (F, 122-23); *Je vous serais bien reconnaissante d'avoir l'obligeance de rechercher si mon mari est prisonnier et le lieu de son internement, Après de nombreuses démarches et interroger de nombreux soldats de sa même compagnie* (F, 229). See also VII.C.

Simplification + Interference

103 -pour *mon père et frère*
-le meilleur *concert j'ai lu*
-*et autres* monuments
-donner *a mes amis et ma famille*
104 -Je pense *que* la télévision est importante *et ça* vaut la peine
-*tous je* sais de la tragédie
210 -aller au pays *de bon vin, bonne cuisine, culture interessante*
-Je *ne veux dire* que la France ("I do not mean...")
211 -qu'*on cru* mort
306 -*quelque chose tort* avec une femme
-*Depuis j'*étais très jeune

Simplification

104 -Aussi, *devrait* pouvoir

The preceding three categories include a greater number of examples than any of the other characteristics in the study. Interference certainly accounts for most of the ellipsis errors; even the two examples given in the "simplification only" division seem more likely errors of performance than of competence. Sections B. and C. contain mostly errors which seem to be produced from a lack of knowledge of French vocabulary or misuse of the dictionary if not from L_1 interference.

E. Lexical reduction. The historical tendency to paraphrase difficult or unfamiliar words is found throughout French society, though more concentrated in the speech of the uneducated. According to Guiraud, one way the illiterate may deal with such "mots savants" is by reanalyzing them and redefining them in terms of familiar words. Therefore, a *pédiatre* may become a *docteur d'enfants* (G, 25); *craindre* becomes *avoir peur* and *rapporter* becomes *faire rapport* (F, 174). See also VI.J.

Simplification + Interference

103 -mon *petit* frère (frère cadet)
-*J'ai eu soin de* vieilles dame (soigner)

Simplification

103 -école *de métier* (école technique)
210 -la *maladie des jambes*
-le souverain *est deveni vieux* (vieillir)
-les *gens aux paysage* (paysans)
306 -*relations de la publique* (relations publiques)

Like the Frenchman who often expresses himself with a limited number of words, the student of French must often paraphrase with his limited vocabulary in order to communicate an idea.

F. Simplification in spelling. Often a matter of standardizing irregular spellings, this classification shows the lack of harmony between the written word and its modern pronunciation. Some cases from FP are *enmener*, *genous*, *sizième*, and *confidenciel* (F, 75). See also III.E. and VI.A.-C.

Simplification + Interference

104 -il *serve*
211 -l'*aristocracie*
-*reapparaisant*
312 -son *désire*

Simplification

103 -tres *longe* heures
-*notres* cadeaux
-un *nouveau* appartement
306 -tout le *temp*

G. Reinforcement by prefix. FP continues the historical trend of reinforcing a word or expression by adding *re-* and *de-* prefixes. Normally this erroneous formation does not change the meaning of the word: *décesser*, *rentrer* (for *entrer*), *devenir de* (for *venir de*), *rajouter* (B, 63).

Simplification + Interference

210 -le fils que j'ai *dénié*
312 -Ulysse *de*part

Simplification

211 -elle *de*vient dire le roi de ça
312 -il le laisse ... puis el *ré*part

H. Reconstruction of word roots from combining two semantic families: *frustre* (< *fruste* + *rustre*), *se revenger* (< *se venger* + *revanche*), *pantomine* (< *pantomime* + *mine*) (F, 48); *exprimation* (< *expression* + *exprimer*), *débordré* (< *débordé* + *ordre*) (G, 26-27). See also I.I

Simplification + Interference

103 -*expresser* (expression + exprimer)
104 -*tremblir* (trembler + *-ir* ending)
210 -J'ai *emmergé* de mon monde (émergé + *emmener*-type prefix)
-je *me promenade* (se promener + promenade)
211 -Hippolyte *confide* à Thésée (confier + confidence)
-une femme *confusée* (confondre + confusion)
-la colère qui est *directé* (dirigé + directe)
312 -une étude *briève* (brève + brièveté)

Simplification

210 -en *incroyance* (incroyable + croyance)
211 -sa *coupabilité* (coupable + culpabilité)
-*chacque* liason (chaque + chacune)
306 -j'*exerce* un métier (exercer + *exciter*, *excès*, *excellence*, etc.
312 -il le *monte* le direction (monter + montrer)

I. Confusion of suffix. Guiraud explains that the confusion of suffixes stems from the existence of two different linguistic systems which form modern *français cultivé*. For example, the feminine form of *liseur* is *liseuse*, but *lecteur* becomes *lectrice* in the feminine (G, 24-25). Incorrect analogy leads to new formations, such as *journaleux* < *journaliste* (B, 60); *voyables* < *visibles*, *aimabilité* < *amitié* (F, 86, 210).

Simplification + Interference

104 -vari*tie* (variété)
-la crimin*al* (criminel)
211 -une solution expédi*ente* (expéditive)
-l'aristocra*cie* (aristocratie)
-chaque individu*ale* (individu)
312 -un prisonn*er* (prisonnier)

Simplification

103 -pend*ent* (pendant)
104 -un peu sen*ille* (sénile)
211 -drama*teur* (drama*tique*)
306 -dessei*neuse* (dessi*natrice*)

J. Elision of consonants. Influenced by pronunciation, the tendency to suppress and soften certain consonants is, according to Bauche, a natural phenomenon of languages. FP produces examples such as *artisse*, *aimabe*, *mécredi* (B, 60). Since this characteristic does involve simplification of pronunciation, the written form of the language seems an unlikely source for evidence of consonant elision.

Simplification

103 -*re*contrer (rencontrer)
-*su*prise (surprise)
-*e*viron (environ)
104 -l'adv*é*saire (adversaire)
-le *meu*tre (meurtre)
211 -*re*seignements (renseignements)
-la ser*rue* (serrure)

K. Metathesis. The inversion of phonemes, usually consonants, within a word represents another FP tendency to facilitate pronunciation, a common phenomenon in language evolution. Methathesis occurs in cases of confusing consonant order or difficult consonant clusters, as in the following words: *corcodile*, *phisolopher* (S, 123, 134); *hynoptisme*, *aréoplane*, *dussèche* (B, 57). The few examples of this characteristic that appeared in the student essays fall under one classification.

Simplification

104 -l'esp*i*rit
211 -la trahison ... est rel*é*vé
312 -l'espirt

II. Articles

A. Over-use of definite article. A common generalization in FP is the use of the article as an indicator of a following substantive. Over-use of the definite article in FP occurs in the following examples: *La Louise*, *C'est la celle au père Armand*, *pour le midi* (B, 82, 91, 149); *la Noël* (F, 197). This tendency accounted for many errors in the student compositions, all

apparently due to simplification alone, although a general lack of understanding of all French articles seems evident. For simplification in other uses of articles, see II.B., III.A.-D. and VIII.D.

Simplification

103 -*le* Noël
-*du* Floride
-la femme *du* mon grandpère
-à plusieurs *les* églises
104 -*le* Dieu
-Amantchi n'a pas *le* rémords
210 -une explosion de *la* couleur
-beaucoup *l'*argot
211 -Phèdre a besoin de *la* raison
-message *du* Molière
312 -*au* cause de son devoir

B. Use of plural partitive article with noun preceded by adjectives. Examples of this tendency in FP are *des belles femmes, des petits enfants* (B, 79); *des autres nouvelles* (F, 197). In the one hundred compositions, few examples of this phenomenon occurred. All that were found were placed under the "simplification" column since such structures do not correspond with English partitives.

Simplification

103 -des bons vacances
210 -des grands problemes
306 -des bonnes notes

C. Lack of elision. *donne-le voir à les types qui sont là* (B, 79); *une demande à les Messieur du Comité, à le restaurant, pas de les autres* (F, 198); *savoir si il ne serait pas prisonnier* (F, 229).

Simplification + Interference

103 -*à le* cave
-près *de les* montagnes
104 -*de le* sujet
-*à les* autres
210 -*de le* Louvre

Other errors of elision found in the student compositions were: *parce que il, je ne allais pas* (103); *la idée* (211), *ma hésitation* (306), and *de humanité* (312). Several errors showing lack of elision occurred with nouns beginning with the letter *h*, like the last two listed. These may have occurred as a result of interference or of overgeneralizing the exceptional cases of aspirate *h*. However, reduction of the aspirate-*h* rule also appeared (*le désir d'hasarder sa vie* — 312) as it does in FP: *l'hasard, les z haricots* (B, 42).

III. Substantives

A. Erroneous gender: semantic analogy. This category shows the confusion that results when a noun of a particular gender suggests the use of the opposite gender: *Un ordonnance, Il a été le dupe dans cette affaire, Un clarinette* (clarinet player) (F, 50). Other gender errors are discussed below in sections B. and C. Almost all gender errors found in the compositions are attributed to simplification alone, since English nouns carry no gender.

Simplification

103 -vieux gens
104 -le victim
-le vendette de Samedi Soir ("vedette")
210 -la prof (accepted now in colloquial French)
211 -une adultère
-un personne
312 -au police

B. Erroneous gender: tendency to assign feminine gender to words ending in a sounded consonant. According to Frei, gender seems to be dictated mostly by a noun's ending, so that nouns which end phonetically in a short vowel are generally masculine, and those which end in a sounded consonant tend to be feminine. Therefore the words outside this generalization are targets for gender errors: *le dynamo* (B, 81); *Le paroi, du toux, une hôpital, une grosse orage* (F, 41); *L'appel est faite, L'air est bonne* (B, 82).

Simplification

	Consonant Ending		**Vowel Ending**
103	-la cours	103	-au fin
	-sa frère		-mon comptabilité
104	-une ... programme	104	-un auto
	-sa crime		-du eau
210	-une match	210	-le main
	-la première jour	211	-le voix
	-la royaume		-petit maison
211	-l'acte centrale	306	-un autre qualité
	-cette drame		-le fonction
306	-la mythe	312	-le fraternité
	-la publique		-le direction
312	-la reste		
	-une symbole		

C. Erroneous gender: tendency to confuse gender in nouns beginning with a vowel. Because a noun starting with a vowel sound receives no phonetic gender distinction by certain articles (*de l'argent, l'orange*), confusion typically occurs in FP when modifiers are added: *Une petite hôtel, ma pauvre argent* (B, 82); *Décrire une ovale, la plus belle âge* (F, 51).

Simplification

103 -bonne été
104 -un auto
-le rouge incandescence
211 -cette acte
-amour détestée
306 -un autre occasion
-une arbre
312 -un petit école
-son principal envie

As might be expected, the number of gender errors is high in comparison to most other categories. Since this study does not involve non-systematic errors — that is, those which show no pattern of simplification — it is not possible to prove that the above tendencies take precedent over random gender assignments. Yet, when some errors are repeated, not only in the same essay but in others as well, it is likely that the students are using common

strategies to assign gender. For instance, the masculine French word *acte* was designated as feminine at least twenty times, in several different compositions. Since it falls into two classifications of gender difficulty (III.B. and III.C.), it is also a potential target for error in FP. Thus one may suspect that, at least in some cases, the same simplification strategies are in play for the learner as for the native speaker.

D. Over-use of plural: semantic analogy: *les escaliers, des pince-nez, deux alternatives, des prudences, les populations* (F, 50, 251).

Simplification + Interference

103 -les fêtes de Noël
104 -dans les étés
-les garçons allaient à bicyclettes
210 -les acoustiques
306 -s'il voudraient voir ... leurs épouses

Simplification

103 -Les sables
-les cuisines bonnes
210 -On ... portera les poids du monde
-qui se rend compte de vérités tôt
211 -Valentine ... avait les désirs pour Gaston

E. Standardization of irregular plurals: *les chevals, les bonhommes* (B, 78); *des oeils, des journals* (F, 207). This category simply represents the extension of regular plural indicators to irregularly-pluralized words. Since the regular plural spelling is the same in English and French, a distinction can not be made between intralingual and interlingual influence in the student samples.

Simplification and/or Interference

103 -des lieus célèbres
-beaucoup de gratte-ciels
104 -Les pauvres sourises (probably interference)
-les hibous
210 -Les gentilhommes
-haut-de-formes
211 -conflits initials
312 -devoirs familials

IV. Adjectives

A. Lack of feminine agreement in predicate adjective or past participle: *elle est furieux, elle est tout petit, elle est tres franc* (B, 86); *elle s'est plaint* (F, 164). All the student examples of this trait are listed as simplification alone, since they seem to represent a simplified use of adjectives. It is feasible, however, to view L_1 interference as a cause of such errors due to the unchanging adjective system in English.

Simplification

103 -notre famille sont a *Juif*
104 -elle serait *cassé*
-la vie est *dur*
210 -la jeune fille s'est *imaginé*
211 -les forces opposées sont *introduits*
-la juxtaposition de scènes est *bon*
-elle est *honteaux* (honteux)

-la réaction du spectateur est *plein* des émotions
306 -Les relations d'affaires sont *importants*
-Elle était très *petit*
312 -Les qualités d'Hector sont *naifs*
-l'école est très *isolé*

B. Formation of opposite gender in invariable adjectives and nouns. Guiraud explains that when French grammar was stabilized, adjective formation was in the process of following the model of masculine/feminine opposition as "*suffixe zéro/-e: noir/noire.*" Although the stabilization of the grammar stopped this evolution, the reduction continues in FP (G, 19). Therefore invariable adjectives such as *tiède* and *pécunière* become *tied* and *pécunier* in the masculine form (B, 85; F, 51-52); inversely, *bleu* and *bizarre* may become *bleuse* and *bizarde* in the feminine (B, 86), based on formations of other adjectives, such as *heureux/heureuse* or *chaud/chaude*. In the same line, nouns may be erroneously assumed to change genders modeled after the pronunciation or spelling of similar words: *partisan/partisante* (G, 20).

Simplification + Interference

104 -le *victim*
210 -un homme très suave et *debonair*

Simplification

104 -la *marie* de Kouane (femme)
-j'ai été *derier* une autre auto (derrière)
211 -son fils et sa *marie*
306 -de la *publique*
312 -les efforts humains deviennent *futils*

C. Confusion in comparative and superlative use. The complexity of the comparative-superlative system in French lends itself to confusion and reduction, especially in FP. In an apparent attempt toward invariability, the French have reduced words in the following manner: *meilleur* > *plus bon*, *mieux* > *plus bien*, *pire* > *plus mauvais*, etc. (F, 155). Examples of FP also include: *il est aussi pire comme l'autre, c'est lui le plus meilleur de tous les autres, il n'est pas si beau comme lui* (B, 87). Most of the errors of comparatives and superlatives made by the students seem to reflect pure interference from English, although simplification of the system may have also played a part.

Simplification + Interference

104 -la qualité *plus importante*: compassion
-je n'ai pas besoin *plus tristesse*
-deux ou *plus langues*
211 -les écoles *les plus bien connus*
306 -*les* facteurs *le plus important*
-*plus que* deux ou trois semaines
-les professeurs peuvent juger les efforts des étudiants *meilleurs* [selon] leurs personalités ("juger mieux")
312 -Cette idée *a developpé plus* (est mieux développée)
-une vie *mieux* que l'autre

D. Lack of agreement with preceding direct object in compound tenses: *la femme que j'ai aimé, je les ai mis (les voiles), la lettre que j'ai écrit* (B, 110). Frei attributes this tendency to the uselessness of the rule: "l'accord n'est nullement indispensable à l'intelligence de la phrase, et le besoin d'invariabilité... cherche naturellement à se défaire de ces procédés qui augmentent inutilement l'effort de mémoire" (F, 183). As with other

errors of agreement, student examples of this deviance are listed as simplification alone, although one may conceive of any lack of adjective or past participle agreement as being modeled after English.

Simplification

104 -*les tragédies* que j'ai *vu*
210 -il a kidnappé *la fille*, et il *l'*a *amené*
-*la poche* que la fille riche a *rossé*
306 -aux *étudiants* qu'ils ont *aimé*
-la maîtresse *nous* a *vu*
312 -une *requête* imprévue est *fait* de lui
-tout le monde *les* ont *proscrit*

E. Hypercorrection in past participle. Isolated cases appear in FP which show overgeneralization of the exceptional rule: *je lui ai écrite une lettre* (G, 37). Most cases of this hypercorrection in FP are found in reflexive forms: *Je me suis faite un chapeau, Elle s'y est mal prise* (F, 56-57). In student compositions, the few such errors that did appear showed clear hypercorrection without reflexives or indirect objects as confusing elements.

Simplification

103 -Ils ont invités
104 -j'ai pensée
211 -Molière [a] creatée (créée)

V. Pronouns

A. Reiteration of subject. Guiraud explains that the repetition of the subject pronoun in FP shows an amalgamation of the pronoun with the verb (G, 43): *cet homme il est allé* (S, 224); *mon père, il est malade* (F, 145). Carried further, these redundant pronouns may not even agree with their subjects, but simply mark a neutral position preceding the verb: *ma femme, il m'a dit, les femmes, ça veut toujours plus qu'on leur en donne* (B, 77). See also category F. of this section.

Simplification + Interference

211 -Pour Valentine *elle* n'a jamais parlé

Simplification

103 -Mon autre frère, qui est mon jumeau, *il* va à l'école
211 -Hippolyte *c'est* l'amour évasif et Thésée *c'est* l'amour détestée
-La fonction structurale ... *c'est*
-Son nom, *c'est* La Duchesse Babette Dupont-Dufort

B. Confusion of pronoun position. Current tendencies of word order, including pronoun position, follow the subject + verb + object pattern: *J'ai pensé à ça, On donne rien à moi, je vous avais envoyé > j'avais vous envoyé > j'avais envoyé à vous* (F, 165-66). In cases of direct-object pronouns, the tendency is to place the indirect object first: *donne-moi le* (B, 99); *pour lui la prendre, faites-moi le savoir* (F, 165). Cases of both direct- and indirect-object pronouns in one sentence were rare in the student essays, but the post-verb position of the object pronoun occurred often, usually showing influences of L_1 interference.

Simplification + Interference

103 -il a payé *me* très bon

-Nous voyions *chaque autre*
-Ils ont invités *moi*
-une vieille amie *de moi*
211 -elle accusera *soi-même*
306 -mon corps est une partie très spécial *à moi*
-Je ne veux pas donner la satisfaction *à eux*
-Je ne veux pas *ça* arriver *à lui*
-besoin de *l'un l'autre*
-dire quelque chose *à elle*

Simplification

104 -mes amis a *m'*aidé
-Kouane a *lui* dit
211 -Cette acte ... garde l'interest *de vous* (generalization of the possessive)

C. Reduction of the relative pronoun. In coping with relative pronouns, FP speakers tend to reduce the system to one common pronoun — *que: la chose que j'ai besoin (dont)* (B, 93-94); *Notre beau-père que j'espère se porte bien (qui), J'ai reçu ta carte que tu me parles de Marie (où), Il y a une chose qu'il faut faire attention (à laquelle)* (F, 185-86). The students made similar simplifications, although most errors found involved only the *qui* > *que* reduction. See also categories D. and E. below.

Simplification

103 -le pays *que*, je pense, est le plus beau (qui)
104 -C'est le soleil *qu'*est employé (qui)
-auto *que* a arreté (qui)
-faire tout *qu'il* est nécessaire (ce qui)
-pour *lesquels qu'*ont besoin de mon aide (ceux qui)
211- un vide *que* vive en homme (qui)
312 -un plateau désert *qu'*est maintenant couvert (qui)
-lutter contre ce *qu'*est déjà décidé (ce qui)
-l'action *que* caractériserait une piece (qui)

D. Reduction of the relative system: over-use of independant clauses. The FP tendency to keep the subject + verb + object order results in the substitution of a subject pronoun for the standard relative pronoun: *Qu'est-ce qu'il vous arrive? , Mon frère qu'il est disparu* (F, 189-90). This reduction of the relative may also result in a redundant direct- or indirect-object pronoun: *Un monsieur que je lui ai vendu ça* (F, 187); *l'homme que ja l'ai vu* (G, 48). Few examples of this tendency were found in the student compositions.

Simplification + Interference

104 -faire tout *qu'il* est nécessaire (ce qui)
211 -Le roi demande à son fils *qu'est-ce qui* est arrivé (ce qui)
-l'amour qui ne sait *qu'est-ce qu'*il doit faire (ce que)

E. Relative pronoun hypercorrection. A less frequent error made by speakers of FP involves the use of less common relatives in place of *que: notre Cher disparu qui depuis le 7 août nous sommes [sans] nouvelles (que), dites-moi je vous prie le sort dont il a pu subir (que)* (F, 190-91).

Simplification + Interference

306 -des amis qui m'aime et *qui* j'aime (que)

Simplification

211 -personnages *dont* nous n'aurions pas pu d'obtenir (que)
312 -du destin *qui* l'homme ne peut pas changer (que)

F. Lack of pronoun-antecedent agreement. The main source of pronoun agreement errors in FP seems to lie in the tendency toward the use of neutral pronouns, which promotes invariability: *Ses chaussures il son mauvaises état, ce qu'elle laisse derrière soi* (F, 146); in speaking of children: *Ca joue, ça rit, ça s'amuse, c'est gentil*; in speaking of a girl: *C'est jeune et ça ne sait pas!* (F, 240); *On nous prie de s'adresser à vous* (F, 147); *vous se feriez mal* (B, 101).

Simplification + Interference

103 -je *ce* veux être tres impressionant (le; je veux qu'il soit...)
104 -*Ca est* mon opinion (C'est)
210 -*On* qui se rend compte (Celui)

Simplification

103 -*Les crevettes et les poissons* sont fantastique dans Floride parce que *il* est trés frais (ils)
-*ma famille* l'habitude de faire un réveillon chez *soi* (nous)
-*Nous* sommes allé *se* promener (nous)
-*Je* suis aller ... *se* amuser avec mes amies (m')
104 -j'aime achéte *quelque chose* quand je *leur* veux (le)
-*La lueur* de sang était toujours là ... *Il* revivait (Elle)
-*notre voiture* a eu une panne. *Il* a finalement demarré (Elle)
-*J'*essaie a budget *soi-même* (me, moi-même)
210 -*un caniche*, mais *ils sont* le stéréotype (c'est)
211 -Orgon defend *Tartuffe* quand Damis s'accuse (l')
-*un* de *ces émotions* (une)
306 -*mon corps* ... et je ne veux pas *la* partager (le)
-*ces sculptures et les peintures* ... qu'*ils* sont (elles)
-*L'école* ... *il* doit être pris sérieusement (elle)
312 -*Les premiers gestes* ... sont *cela* d'Hôte (ceux)

VI. Verbs

A. Tendency toward the regular *-er* verb. The inclination to simplify verb conjugations to one regular pattern results in two kinds of verb manipulation. One involves the substitution of regular verbs for irregular ones — a trait which has developed throughout the history of the language. Thus, over the centuries, *-er* verbs have slowly started to replace irregular verbs or those of the second and third conjugations, especially in conversation: *clore* > *fermer, reconnaître* > *identifier, aller* > *marcher, vouloir* > *désirer, subir* > *endurer*, etc. Another method of simplifying difficult verb forms is to reconstruct the verb with an *-er* ending. Such efforts have produced erroneous verb forms such as: *confusionner* < *confondre* (F, 172-73); *taiser* < *taire, buver* < *boire, romper* < *rompre, pleuver* < *pleuvoir* (S, 136). The students simplified some verb forms in the same manner. See also categories B. and C. below.

Simplification + Interference

211 -le pére *confusé*

Simplification

103 -je suis *venuée*
-J'ai travaille pour Cocos à *servé* les gens
210 -en *choisant* le chose qui est le plus importante

-je *sorte*
-je ... *assaye* au café
211 -La solution de probleme ... est *résoudée*
-il veut *parter*
312 -Il *vive* une vie

B. Reduction of verb forms: analogy to infinitive or to a conjugated form. Some FP deviances in conjugated verb forms and in past participles result from modeling the verb after the infinitive: *je noye, Je le feuill'trai* (F, 168); *je bouille, j'ai pouvu* (B, 103, 115); *ouvri, éteindu, offri* (past participles) (S, 174). Other verb forms seem patterned after regular verbs or any of the conjugated forms of the same verb: *J'ai sentu, vous disez, j'assis, je boivais, nous courrions* (imperfect) (B, 114-115). Numerous false analogies of verb forms occur in the student samples. Since such errors are by definition derived from analogy within the L_2, L_1 interference is almost never an apparent cause of the problem. See also category C. below.

Simplification + Interference

104 -il *serve*
312 -Ulysse *sermone* sur ses opinions

Simplification

103 -nous *prendons*
-ma soeur et moi *iriont*
104 -le soleil était *rougu*
-sa arrière etait *mouvue*
-elle a *deviendue*
-Les vielles gens ... *s'y courraient*
210 -la poche *s'est apparaître*
-je *recevois*
-ies touristes *voyent*
-il a *a:teindt* son mort
-tu l'*a* fait
-quand je *peuve*
211 -en *résoudent* ce conflit
-ils ne *pouvent* pas
-ils *réduissent*
306 -je *continuera*
-je *peut*
-les femmes qui *faisent*
-ils n'*ageent* pas
312 -il *vive* une vie

C. Confusion in formation of future stems. The need for consistency in language rules stands out in FP's deviant formations of future and conditional tenses. Simplification strategies are found by applying regular rules to irregular verbs, or by overgeneralizing the rules for irregular verbs: *Cela ... metterait, je voirai, je reçoiverr.* (F, 170); *nous receverions, nous aidrions, je couvrerai, je paraisserai, je mourirai* (B, 114-15); *il venirai* (S, 166).

Simplification

103 -*j'allerai*
-je ne *voirai* pas
104 -Il *pouvrait*
-Un professeur *maintenirais*
306 -je *ferrai*
312 -ils *ferraient*

D. Disappearance and confusion of *passé simple*. The use of the preterite in speech has virtually disappeared, not only in FP but in all conversational levels of the language. However, in the rare cases that one uses *passé simple*, such as in telling an anecdote, erroneous forms occur which are typically "popular," such as *il s'enfuya (il s'enfuit)* and *il envahissa* (B, 105). Of the one hundred student compositions in this study, forty-nine used past tense, and of those forty-nine, only one was written in *passé simple*. One formation error appeared in that 306-level paper: *Nous ne jouîmes pas tout le temps (jouâmes*, error of simplification).

Although this tense is still widely used in the written form of the French language, it seems to be avoided by students of French unless specifically assigned. There are several possible reasons for the lack of preterite use in student compositions: (1) it is a relatively new tense to intermediate-level students, who prefer to use a more familiar verb form (*passé composé*), (2) the students have not been well-instructed in when to use the *passé simple*, and (3) intermediate-level professors do not encourage its use because it is being used less frequently by francophones and is not necessary for effective communication.

E. Confusion of subjunctive/indicative; avoidance of subjunctive. Much like the preterite, the subjunctive mode is being used less and less in French. According to Bauche, the imperfect subjunctive has completely disappeared in FP. Where possible, speakers of FP avoid using the subjunctive by rearranging the syntax of the sentence, substituting the conditional or an infinitive clause (see category F). Otherwise, the subjunctive may be replaced by the indicative: *Sans qu'on sait pourquoi, Quoiqu'il est pas là* (F, 199); *C'est embêtant que je peux pas le voir, Je veux qu'il vient* (B, 109). Most common in what Bauche calls FP's "*style noble*" (B, 94), overgeneralizations occur, where the subjunctive is used in positions requiring the indicative mode: *je suppose qu'il soit prisonnier, Je vous donne tous les renseignements que je puisse vous donner, si ... vous puissiez arriver, Il est probable qu'il ne doive pas rentrer* (F, 58-59).

Confusion of subjunctive forms was significant in the student essays. The examples that lack the required subjunctive are placed in the division that includes interference, since subjunctive is not always used in English for the structures below. Hypercorrections (excessive use of subjunctive) are listed as simplification alone. No example of the imperfect subjunctive appeared in the compositions, probably for the same reasons as listed in category D. above.

Simplification + Interference

103 -avant [que] l'ecole *est* commencé
104 -Quoique je n'*ai* pas vu
-en sorte qu'on *peut* montrer
-il faut que le soleil *sert*
210 -jusqu'à ce que vous me *trouvez*
-Elle a peur que Hector la *trahira*
306 -C'est important que je *suis* en bonne forme
-Il faut que l'étudiant *connaît*
-Je ne pense pas qu'ils *auraient*
-Je ne pense pas que mon petit ami *voudrait* l'idée
312 -sans que nous *voyons*

Simplification

103 -je ne suis pas certain que j'*aie* d'argent
-je voudrais *que je fasse* (faire)
104 -Si les enfants *sachent*
210 -Hector dit au roi qu'il *parte*
-le pourboire que je lui *aie* donné
-je trouvais que le w.c. *soit*

-ils croyaient qu'il *ait* été
211 -Si elle *réunisse*
306 -Je suppose que chaque personne *ait* son goût
312 -il est content du peu qu'il *aie* (form and mode)
-Même si la scène ... *puisse* sembler

F. Infinitive clause created. Bauche explains this phenomenon:

> ... [la langue populaire] marque une tendance très forte à remplacer le subjonctif par l'infinitif toutes les fois qu'il est possible de le faire. Cette tournure est d'ailleurs absolument française. Ex.: "il lui a donné ce jouet pour qu'elle s'amuse" ou bien "il lui a donné ce jouet pour s'amuser". (Cette forme crée une confusion, d'ailleurs. On ne sait si c'est le donateur qui s'amuse en donnant le jouet.) En [langue populaire], le pronom ne disparaît pas. On dira dans ce cas: *Il lui a donné ce jouet pour elle s'amuser. Il m'a écrit pour moi venir* ("il m'a écrit de venir") (B, 109-10).

Other examples include: *m'envoyez son adresse pour moi lui écrire, Tu me demandes une longue lettre pour toi savoir, Je vous remercie pour vos autres conseils; à les suivre par moi malheureusement c'est trop tard* (F, 94). Some deviant infinitive clauses occur in the interlanguage compositions, and not all of the errors are the result of avoiding the subjunctive. Most seem influenced by English structures, coupled with a tendency to avoid relative pronouns, conjugated verbs, or clauses in general.

Simplification + Interference

103 -je *ce* veux *être* très impressionant
-*comme* l'été *continuer*
104 -Dieu veux tout le monde *vivre* heureusements et *être* les gardiens
211 -cette acte cause une idée *développer*
-Oéone *la* suggère *d'accuser* Hippolyte
-M. DuPont a toujours voulu *pour sa fille Babette d'être* célèbre
306 -Je ne veux pas tous le monde *me voir* sans vêtements
-Je ne veux pas *ça arriver*
-Je ne veux pas mon petit-ami *être* embarassé

G. Lack of agreement between subject and verb. Three particular causes emerge to explain errors of agreement which are typical of FP. One is the tendency to assimilate verb conjugations, which has been discussed above in category B. This tendency leads to forms such as *je vas, j'a, j'est, nous sais, nous sons* (F, 163). Distance between the subject and the verb seems to cause the greatest confusion in FP, especially when *qui* or an object precedes the verb: *C'est moi qui a, nos hommes qui boit* (B, 93); *la mort de mon pauvre père les ont bien frappé, C'est du reste à ses membres que reviennent la réussite* (F, 56). See also category H. below.

The task of seperating the student errors of this nature according to the presence or lack of L_1 interference is difficult, because of the few distinctions within one conjugation in English. Aside from the few verbs which could have come directly from English, the agreement errors have been placed in the simplification column. It is feasible to see the lack of verb changes in English as causing such errors as *Mes rêves va loin!* ; one may translate "go" into the first word that comes to mind that means "go" in French, whether it be *va, vais, allons*, or *aller*. However, any influence from English in this case is indirect and the error made comes from simplification within the L_2.

Simplification + Interference

211 -Les fonctions de cette acte *cause*
306 -*C'est* les bons étudiants qui accentuent les choses
312 -les choses exotiques qui *represent*

Simplification

103 -parce que nous *a* été à l'écoles
-Mon frère, ma petite amie et moi *sont* allé
-Les crevettes et les poissons sont fantastique en Floride parce que *il est* trés frais
104 -les ambulances *est* partis
-ma mère et moi *ont* été
-Ces garçons *avait*
210 -Je n'*a* pas vu
-Tous chemins *mène* à la même fin
-les gens *disait*
211 -les autres personnages qui *vive*
-le degré de la culpabilité dans les trois personnages *sont* differente
-L'émotion de cette acte *sont*
306 -des amis qui m'*aime*
-Madame King nous *fîmes* travailler
-Mes rêves *va* loin!
312 -Les mâts qui *fuit*
-Ulysse et Hector se *parle*
-tout le monde les *ont* proscrit

H. Confusion of subject-verb agreement due to semantic analogy. Frei states that the most frequent examples of this error in FP concern the conflict between a morphological singular and a semantic plural: *Tout le monde s'en vont, tout le monde disent* (B, 91); *le reste son[t] en Belgique, aucun de ses camarades ne l'ont vu, La foule que remplit les rues observent un silence absolu* (F, 60).

Simplification

103 -ma famille *sont allés*
-notre famille *auront*
104 -tout le monde *joueront*
210 -tout le mond *avaient*
306 -La plupart des professeurs que j'ai eu *était* (hypercorrection)
312 -tout le monde les *ont proscrit*

I. Use of conditional in *si*-clauses: *Si qu'on irait voir ça? ("si on allait voir ça? "), Si qu'on serait été là-haut, qu'est que c'est qu'on aurait pris!* (B, 108); *si tu serais gentil tu viendrais me voir* (G, 40).

Simplification

103 -Je manquerais mes parents ... *si je n'irais pas* les voir
210 -*si nous pourrions* habiter
-*Si j'irais* en France

J. "Generic" verbs (discursive economy). One of the traits of FP involves reducing the lexicon. Instead of using more precise verbs, for example, the FP speaker paraphrases or substitutes with a "generic" verb such as *faire* or *avoir: Faire la vaisselle (laver), faire la chambre (balayer, nettoyer), faire de l'argent (gagner)* (F, 152-53). Paraphrasing with the limited vocabulary of an intermediate-level student of French shows the resourcefulness used in order to communicate in an interlanguage. Even if the student has learned a particular verb, he may in his efforts to communicate resort to a more common verb or to a group of familiar words.

Simplification + Interference

103 -Je veux *faire un visite aux* mes parents (rendre visite à)

104 -Ce professeur *fait* sa classe amusante (rend)
210 -Son but ... était *faire* de l'argent (gagner)
306 -*Il y a* plusieurs qualités *qui font* un bon étudiant (Un bon étudiant doit posséder plusieurs qualités, etc.)
-Cela me *ferait plus âgé* (vieillirait)
-je *fait* une décision (prends)
312 -Stéphane Mallarmé *fait des comparaisons entre* (compare)

Simplification

103 -J'aimais *fait de la peinture* (peindre)
210 -le souverain *est devenu vieux* (a vieilli)
-aller en France *pour faire les vacances* (en vacances, pour prendre les vacances, etc.)
-je veux *marcher* et voir (me promener)
211 -la fin *est* avec la mort de Hippolyte (arrive, se dévoile)
-Cettes liaisons ... *sont* un rapport entre les trois pièces (établissent)
-le spectateur *fait un rapport entre* l'artist *et* la stupidité (compare à, raccorde, lie à, établit un rapport entre)
312 -caractéristiques stagnants que ... *auraient tous de nous* comme Sisyphe (nous condamneraient)

K. Confusion of transitive/intransitive (of verbs taking direct/indirect objects). Frei explains that "le besoin d interchangeabilité demande naturellement que l'échange entre transitif et intransitif puisse s'effectuer avec le moins possible de changements" (F, 215). Thus, FP may employ some verbs interchangeably as transitive or intransitive: *Bouger les pieds, Entrer des marchandises* (F, 215); *Je me rappelle de lui, Je n'ai pas pensé d'acheter les journaux, Pourquoi que vous avez quitté d'ici?* (B, 132). This confusion also leads to the interchangeability of direct- and indirect-object pronouns: *Elle l'apprend à mal faire ("elle lui apprend"), elle lui a empêché de sortir ("elle l'a empêché")* (B, 132).

Simplification + Interference

103 -Je *les* ai *manquée*
-j'apprendrais par *leur écouter*
-Les intérêts egoïstes doivent *écarter* en sorte qu'on peut ("step aside, keep away")
210 -le souverain ne *lui aurait* jamais *regardé*
-Ce fait *lui a harassé*
-[elle] *a dit les fils* leurs futurs
211 -Orgon *demande Damis* quitter sa maison
-elle doit *marier Tartuffe* (se marier avec)
306 -il *enseigne ses étudiants* dans une manière
-J'aurais à *dire mes amis*
-Je ne veux pas *déshabiller* devant les hommes (no reflexive)
312 -Ce long explanation d'Ulysse *ressemble un discours*

Simplification

104 -une grande onde *lui a remporté*
-quand je *leur veux*
211 -Ils *lui aiment*
306 -nous *simulions à dormir* pour trente minutes
-la maîtresse *lui a emmené*
-toutes les femmes *leur veulent*
312 -la guerre *s'éclate*

The major causes for this frequent error from the student samples seem to be L_1 interference and confusion between direct- and indirect-object pronouns in the third person.

L. Confusion of auxiliary in *passé composé: Il a parti, Le soldat D. a resté entre les mains de l'ennemi, il avait tombé sur le champs de bataille, Je suis été à Lausanne* (F, 86, 149); *on est réussi, nous sommes marchés devant* (S, 188, 190).

Simplification

103 -j'*ai retourné*
-je *suis* cependant *habité*
-j'*ai alle*
-j'*ai resté*
-nous *sommes visités*
-nous *sommes fait*
-nous *sommes vus*
104 -il *a tombé*
-nous *a venu*
-il *serait été* paralysée
-je ne *serais* pas *dit*
306 -nous *avons monté*

Most examples of this trait come from the 103 and 104 levels.

M. Confusion of auxiliary of *passé composé* in reflexive verbs. With a tendency to form all *passé composé* structures with a single auxiliary, Guiraud explains, a generalization appears in FP using the most common auxiliary, *avoir*, even with past reflexive forms (G, 40). Frei adds that the confusion may come from using *avoir* with the verbs as non-reflexives, so that it seems natural to keep the same auxiliary: *je m'avais adressé à, Il s'a rendu* (F, 166); *je m'ai fait mal, je m'ai acheté un costume, je m'ai trompé* (B, 105, 116). Very few such samples appeared in the student essays.

Simplification + Interference

103 -*J'ai cassé ma* jambe (not used reflexively)

Simplification

103 -notre amis *s'ont mariés*
306 -Elle *s'a appelle* Martha

VII. Adverbs

A. Adverb carries marks of agreement. In FP, an adverb can agree with the subject or the object in a sentence: *C'est elle qui est la mieux habillée, c'est eux qui sont venus les plus tôt* (B, 122); *Je me suis toute salie ma robe* (F, 57). A few examples from the compositions occur showing the same phenomenon.

Simplification

103 -aller à *beaucoups* soirées
104 -Dieu veut to t le monde vivre *heureusements*
211 -les écoles *les* plus bien connus
306 -*toutes* les deux

B. Grammatical transposition: preposition = adverb. Guiraud remarks that many adverbs are only reinforced prepositions (*devant, dessus, dessous, dehors*) and that many prepositions are merely adverbs combined with *de (en face de, en haut de, au-dessus de)*. He states that "Ces 'locutions' prépositives ou adverbiales correspondent à un effort de la langue cultivée pour différencier deux 'parties du discours' qui ont des fonctions grammaticales différentes" (G, 62-63). Like the "*ancienne langue,*" however, FP allows a freer interchange of adverbs and prepositions. The adverb functions as a preposition in cases like *Auparavant le jour, aussitôt la retraite, Tomber en bas les escaliers, en haut le rayon* (F, 216-17). Inversely, the preposition in FP may take the position of an adverb: *il lui a rentré dedans, il a couché avec, tu n'as pas travaillé pour* (B, 123); *C'est selon, je suis sans* (F, 218).

Some learner errors were found using adverbs as prepositions, but none were found in the opposite usage. All adverb > preposition errors seem somewhat influenced by English and/or by improper use of a dictionary.

Simplification + Interference

103 -écrire *environ* mon été
-Les trés jolie femmes vont à pied *en haut* ... la plage
104 -un jeune garçon, *autour* dix ou onze ans, a plongé
-l'auto vite a allé *à bas* la rue
210 -Elle a regardé *autour* le jardin
-que la W.C. soit *lointain de* ma chambre
306 -un milliard des hommes *partout* le monde
312 -une vie *au loin des* liens

C. Deletion of *ne* in negative structures. Since the word *pas* has gained a negative significance over the centuries, the true mark of negation, *ne*, has fallen in importance. *Ne* has become almost superfluous, and is often dropped in FP usage: *J'ai pas su, Elles ont pas voulu, Dérangez-vous pas* (B, 121); also, *j'y crois guère, j'ai vu personne, j'en ai qu'un* (G, 71). Sometimes, to compensate for the loss of *ne*, two negative markers are deemed necessary in FP: *j'ai pas rien trouvé, je connais pas aucun homme* (B, 121); *J'y crois pas guère* (G, 71).

Simplification + Interference

104 -*personne a fait* très mal
-quelquefois *il y a ni personne* aider
306 -presque *aucun* métier *est* meilleur
312 -comme Sisyphe, poussant un rock constamment en montant et *jamais allons nulle part*

Simplification

306 -Ils *ont pas* de pudeur
ces hommes *ont pas* de pudeur

D. Hypercorrection of negative: *ne* + two negative elements. With the use of two negative markers comes the hypercorrection — *ne* and *pas* emphasized by a more specific negative element: *N'ayant pas encore rien reçu, Personne ne veut pas ça, Ca n'a pas aucune importance* (F, 59).

Simplification (hypercorrection)

103 -il *n'*était *pas rien* de faire
210 -*Personne n'*aimait *pas* l'homme
306 -je *n'*aime *pas* regarder le corps nu d'*aucun* homme
-*personne ne* me demanderait *pas* de poser
-on *ne* devrait *pas* montrer son corps nu à *n'importe qui*

VIII. Prepositions

A. Over-use of *à* or *de* before the infinitive. This tendency of FP, according to Guiraud, overgeneralizes patterns in which the verb takes *à* or *de* before a substantive: "*chercher quelqu'un, dire quelque chose* ...; mais: *chercher à venir, dire de venir*" (G, 74). Thus, FP carries these models unnecessarily to other verbs: *J'ai plusieurs endroits à aller, vous n'avez pas que moi à vous occuper, vous aimez d'être seul, Je préfère d'aller tout nu* (F, 193, 212-13).

Confusion in prepositional use seemed to be the greatest problem to the students overall. However, only a few samples fell into this category.

Simplification

103 -je veux *de* visiter
-Je dois avoir beaucoup d'argent *d*'aller (substitution of *pour*)
-J'aurai l'intention d'allant *de* voyaient-ils
211 -nous n'aurions pas pu *d*'obtenir
306 -le temps *à* les aider (substitution for *pour*)
-il serait difficile pour un bon professeur *à* être enthousiaste
-les étudiants ... sont plus confortable *à* parler et *à* montrer
-Je n'attendrais guère *à* aller
312 -il veut "*D*'être parmi..."
-Le poète désire *d*'échapper
-il désire *d*'être comme eux

B. Erroneous use of *de* marking complement of relation. Based on standard structures such as *couvert de neige* (F, 88), *rien de spécial*, and *un peu de vin*, FP extends the use of *de* as a mark of relation between one word and its modifier: *J'ai une de casserole, j'ai deux de poulets* (B, 79, 89); *pas de salle de libre, C'est de l'argent de perdu, vous vous amusez un peu d'trop, n'approchez pas de trop* (F, 89, 202).

Simplification + Interference

103 -le premier *de* janvier
210 -toute *de* le Louvre
-tous *de* nous

Simplification

103 -la culture *de* Grec
-Il était un *de* mémorable moment
-pres *de* un mois
-une bande de rock et roll *d*'anglais
-football *d*'américan
104 -mon *d*'argent
211 -selon *de* les voeux
306 -j'ai eu trop *de* peur
-Les femmes utilisent leur corps et pas *de* leur intelligence

C. Over-use of *à* as preposition denoting location and direction. Frei states that *à* serves as a " '*locatif générique*" in FP, replacing other prepositions: *Confinée à l'Europe, le volume que vous avez aux mains, Les accidents à la rue* (F, 149). *A* also functions as a preposition of direction in the place of other prepositions: *dirigé à une ambulance, Partir à Paris, J'irai au coiffeur* (F, 150).

Simplification + Interference

103 -*à* ma maison (chez moi)
-Je vais être *à* chez moi

Simplification

103 -*à* Floride
-*à* Maine, *à* New Hampshire
-dans *au* sud de la Georgia
210 -L'homme habillait dans la forêt *à* une caverne (dans)
306 -*à* la Suisse
312 -le direction *à* Tinguit
-la route *à* Tinguit
-le direction *aux* pâturages

In the student compositions, *en* was used erroneously even more than *à* as a preposition of location ("*en Atlanta*"), perhaps due to its resemblance to "in" in English.

D. Preposition takes determiner after adverb of quantity. This characteristic of FP represents the standardization of a rule — the need for invariability throughout the language: *Assez des bonnes nouvelles, beaucoup de monde, Il ne reçoit pas des nouvelles* (F, 198-99); *il y a beaucoup des gens* (B, 120).

Simplification

103 -*beaucoup des* autres choses
-*beaucoup des* fois
-*beaucoup du* médecin
104 -*plusieurs des* qualités
-*beaucoup des* garçons et filles
210 -Nous n'avons *pas* eu *des* problèmes
-*beaucoup des* lampes
211 -*plein des* emotions et idées
-le *degré de la* culpabilité
306 -je ne fais *pas du* mal
-*un mill[i]* *les* hommes
-*beauc* *des* étudiants
-*une m.* *de* l'argile
312 -Il n'y a *[illegible]* îlôts fertiles"

As mentioned in the previous chapter, other characteristics of simplification exist in FP, many which do not occur in the interlanguage samples. Several traits showing simplification in the student samples (plural agreements, and confusion of *passé composé* and imperfect, for example) are apparently not characteristic of FP. Thus, one should remember that the analysis in this chapter only lists traits that both language forms hold in common. Conclusions derived from the data are discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR:
CONCLUSION

This study examines the concept of language simplification — the way it is defined, its importance to research into language universals, and the similarities of its patterns in *français populaire* and in the French produced by American students.

Chapter One summarizes recent research on simplification as a system within a language, detected through error analysis. Evidence from these studies linked L_1 acquisition with L_2 acquisition, pidginization-creolization with L_1 learning and with L_2 learning, pidgins with "baby talk," "foreigner talk," "lover's talk" and "deaf talk," and FP with L_1 learning and pidgin-creole development. Linking simplification processes in FP with those in L_2 acquisition would follow if the evidence were sufficient.

With the aim of discovering whether the two languages present similar forms of simplification, I analyze student errors as described in the second chapter. Based on descriptions of FP, a list of typical grammatical and morphological simplifications was prepared. From one hundred compositions written in French by students at the University of Georgia, I recorded errors showing simplification and compared them with simplifications in FP. Chapter Three lists errors which resemble simplifications in FP, sub-divided according to the presence or absence of apparent interference from English. The conclusions drawn from the data appear below.

I. Implications of the Analysis

Examples of student errors resembling simplification in FP were found in each grammatical category. Although the data was not analyzed statistically, the results of this exploratory study show that speakers of FP and American students of French employ simplification systems which are similar in many respects. The most common student errors were found in the following categories: transposition of grammatical elements ("*[il] represente l'autoritaire*"), semantic confusion ("*pays étrange*" < *étranger*), ellipsis of elements ("*Depuis j'étais très jeune*"), gender error ("*cette drame*"), confusion of pronoun position ("*ils ont invités moi*"), lack of pronoun/antecedent agreement ("*La lueur... Il*"), confusion of verb form by analogy to infinitive or other verb form ("*ils ne pouvent pas*"), subjunctive/indicative confusion ("*Il faut que l'étudiant connaît*"), lack of subject/verb agreement ("*Mes rêves va loin!* "), "generic" verb substitutions ("*faire de l'argent*"), and confusion of transitive/intransitive or direct/indirect objects ("*je leur veux*"). Many of these characteristics also occur commonly in English as deviations from the norm: *I wish I was there, She dances good, Everybody should do their own work*.

Many grammatical categories showing simplification in French do not correspond to English structures. The characteristics which caused frequent student errors comprise gender confusion, lack of gender and plural agreement, distinction of relative pronouns (especially *qui* vs. *que*), verb formation errors (tendency towards the first conjugation, confusion in future stems, confusion of *avoir/être* auxiliaries in the *passé composé*), omission of *ne* in the negative, and confusion of the prepositions that follow particular verbs.

The analysis does not include student errors which were apparently caused from L_1 interference alone. Thus it is not possible to compare the general frequencies of interlingual and intralingual errors. The analysis does however show that within the boundaries of

simplification errors the examples of intralingual errors were found much more frequently than those which appeared to be influenced by English. This finding supports the conclusion by Buteau that "the concept of similarity has to be considered internally, from the point of view of the French subsystems, as well as externally, from a comparative point of view with English."[69]

As mentioned in Chapter Three, the analysis does not incorporate all the traits of simplification in FP nor all the elements of simplification in American students' French. Yet the survey covers the major features of the phenomenon of language simplification and shows obvious similarities between the two systems.

II. Pedagogical Applications

The underlying purpose of this research is to understand language learning better and thus to propose better teaching approaches. As the analysis suggests, students of French do use simplified forms of the target language, and in this case, many structures appeared in written form which resemble simplification in spoken FP usage.

One should not assume that FP is in reality simpler than standard French. With its hypercorrections and expressive vocabulary, FP may indeed be regarded as rather complex. Its speakers, however, do tend to simplify the rule system of French and yet communicate very effectively. The idiom unfortunately carries the disadvantage of being a social dialect, and its users may be immediately identified by any Frenchman as uneducated or lower-class. Therefore, FP as a whole should not be used as a pedagogical norm, because it could misrepresent the learner's social and educational background:

> As "speakers," ... American students visiting France need to know the kind of French that will enable them to express themselves most effectively, in the greatest number of situations, without unduly shocking or amusing their listeners, and without calling upon themselves some undesirable labeling. It seems evident that a student who has devoted much time and energy acquiring an education would not especially want to be "branded" as uneducated, uncouth, or even rude.[70]

As Bonin suggests, the standard language should be learned first since "a 'middle of the road' language style will certainly be more acceptable in a greater variety of circumstances than a highly stylized one, be it formal or colloquial."[71]

Yet, FP can still be of use, pedagogically speaking. As discussed in the first chapter, Schumann and Valdman and Phillips propose that second-language acquisition be based on the pidginization model. Like a pidgin, FP commonly reduces grammatical structures by overgeneralizing rules. Many recent studies suggest an emphasis on rule generalization and reduced syllabi. Patricia Powell concludes that "we are trying to teach too much — too few students are successful in acquiring the syllabus we have proposed," and she discusses learning much of the usual grammar for passive use only.[72] M. P. Jain contends that learner errors are systematic and that better rule generalizations should be presented to students:

> An implicit faith in this kind of approach is not to regard errors as exemplifiers of "linguistic sin" to be subjected to "intensive remedial drill"; rather it is to consider them as an essential condition of learning, providing the teacher with clues on how to take the learner from limited rule schemata to more generalized ones, establishing the latter as more "significant" than the former.[73]

According to Magdelhayne Buteau, the more extensive the rule generalization, the more easily the rule may be learned and applied.[74] H. V. George proposes teaching a "little language," covering the language needs with the most regularity possible in order to reduce errors.[75]

The analysis in the previous chapter reveals the considerable amount of intralingual simplification found in the student compositions. As in other recent studies, this finding shows the need for error analysis — as opposed to contrastive analysis — for understanding the sources of student errors. Buteau concludes that from a linguistic point of view, "difficulty is a function of the number of possible alternatives involved," the alternatives being the various choices such as kind of sentence, group of verb, type of pronoun, nature of function, direction of relationship, etc., "whose similarity with what has been learnt before has to be clearly perceived."[76] If the number of "alternatives" can be reduced at the elementary level, allowing only the essential for effective communication, students might be less confused from the irregularities and exceptions. At the beginning stages, the student would have more time to use the necessary grammar actively with fewer errors and to gain a fuller understanding of grammatical relationships. With this "little language" as a solid base, the students should be able to grasp the more difficult points with clearer understanding. Their expanding needs for communication and especially for comprehension would dictate the syllabus of intermediate and advanced courses.

The search for effective rule generalizing leads to FP as a possible source. In that language form, rules have been extended beyond the norm for centuries without sacrificing communicative effectiveness and as the phenomenon of *français avancé* attests, many substandard popular and colloquial forms eventually become accepted into standard French. Although the erroneous forms are not desirable for teaching, they do point to particular rules which are so commonly accepted that the FP users over-extend them by analogy.

Since data from the previous chapter shows that American students of French produce some overgeneralizations which are similar to those of FP, one may assume that, with modifications, FP generalizations could stand as a natural model for early L_2 acquisition. By teaching standard vocabulary and pronunciation from the first, the possibilities of social stigmatization are greatly reduced for the learner. Then as the student progresses in his language studies, the syllabus could present the irregularities, rule exceptions and formal vocabulary which separate standard French from FP. This expansion should fit in naturally with the student's needs for communication:

> Many of the grammatical structures produced at the early stages of language learning are "simplified" and "reduced," but as a learner progresses, he uses more expanded forms which seem to reflect changes in his needs for expression.[77]

In his study of relative pronouns, Joel Walz demonstrates an example of using a reduced model for teaching a foreign language. Following the lead of FP, he suggests reducing the use of relatives to only *que, qui* and possibly *où* at the elementary level. This suggestion is backed by frequency tests which show that these pronouns account for 86 to 89 per cent of the relative pronouns in formal French. Other relatives are introduced at the intermediate level (after at least one year's study), and finer details of the relative system are presented at the advanced level.[78]

Albert Valdman found that in order for a student to acquire some communicative competence in near-native situations, a program of instruction must "greatly limit the grammatical structure and lexicon" and "provide facilitative teaching sequences." In his analysis of the pedagogical ordering of interrogative structures, he justifies teaching simplified structures initially (WH-fronting: *Comment tu t'appelles?* and intonation: *Tu t'appelles Jean?*), although the FP WH-fronting device is "a sociolinguistically stigmatized construction which many educated speakers consider downright ungrammatical." Valdman suggests teaching *est-ce que* forms and inversion later in the course.[79] For both relatives and interrogatives, the more difficult structures could be taught for recognition only, depending on the emphasis of the class. Valdman applies his pedagogical suggestions in his college textbook by teaching such substandard forms as *Comment tu t'appelles?* first.[80]

The study of errors in student interlanguage also leads to the question of predicting learner errors. By being familiar with typical FP structures, language teachers could prepare for the occurrence of similar structures from their students. Teachers should not penalize students severely for errors committed which resemble FP generalizations and reductions, especially if communication has not been hindered; they should instead inform the students of the social stigma that such usage might cause. Thus students will know the limitations of their communicative efforts and perhaps strive to learn more widely acceptable structures.

Teachers and textbook authors should pay particular attention to structures which lend themselves easily to English interference as well as overgeneralization within the French system. An obvious trouble spot would be anticipated, for example, when standard French requires pronoun position outside the natural subject + verb + object pattern: a student could be influenced either by English structures or by typical French order or by both, when he says **Ils ont invité moi* or **Je ne donne rien à lui.* Both interlingual and intralingual interference may likewise influence the student to produce the indicative mood in place of the subjunctive: **Je ne crois pas qu'elle sait la vérité.*

This study shows that students also tend to simplify those French structures which are already "simplified" in English. Such problem areas, which also occur at the FP level, include gender assignment, various verbal and adjectival agreements, and some article uses (**mon frère et soeur*, **J'aime bien café*). Studies in acquisition order of these structures may suggest less confusing and more natural approaches to learning these elements.

One final aspect to consider in designing the syllabus is the Frenchman's tolerance for different errors. Since many of today's teaching methods allow certain errors to occur without immediate teacher correction, and since the method presented above takes its base from a substandard language, it is important to know which errors cause irritation to the listener and which inhibit comprehensibility. L. G. Piazza tested various errors for their degree of acceptability to French students. She found that the students were most tolerant of erroneous tense usage (confusion of imperfect and *passé composé*, lack of subjunctive, conditional in a *si*-clause) and agreement (genders, subject/verb ending).[8] In fact, most of the more acceptable errors were those made by some Frenchmen themselves, especially at the FP level. Thus FP may also serve the teacher in deciding which errors need the most correction.

III. Suggestions for Further Research

At this point, it would be presumptuous to assume the existence of universal psycholinguistic processes from this study; the underlying linguistic causes for any particular error cannot be positively identified without student feed-back. However, the evidence procured does allow for a hypothesis that processes of language simplification in FP are similar to those in the interlanguage of American students of French. More qualified evidence linking the two systems would thus promote the hypotheses of universal language simplification and common learning and communication strategies.

In addition, researchers should analyze individual grammar points in FP, applying the generalizations to early language learning, and modifying those points according to their acceptability in standard French. Studies should seek out the growing communicative needs of the elementary language learners through error analysis, adjusting the text syllabi and teaching methods accordingly. After some mastery of standard French grammar, the student may desire to learn more colloquial and more literary styles for active use. Ultimately, foreign language teachers and textbook authors must be constantly sensitive to the students' communicative needs while using discretion in choosing the material they present.

NOTES

[69] Magdelhayne F. Buteau, "Students' Errors and the Learning of French as a Second Language: A Pilot Study," *IRAL*, 8 (1970), 133-45; rpt. in *New Frontiers in Second Language Learning*, ed. John H. Schumann and Nancy Stenson (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1975), p. 27.

[70] Bonin, p. 99.

[71] Bonin, p. 100.

[72] Powell, p. 42.

[73] Jain, p. 208.

[74] Buteau, p. 27.

[75] George, p. 54.

[76] Buteau, pp. 27, 31.

[77] Fathman, p. 36.

[78] Joel Walz, "The Relative Pronouns in French, II: A Pedagogical Norm," *French Review* 54 (1981), 843-48.

[79] Albert Valdman, "Error Analysis and Pedagogical Ordering: The Determination of Pedagogically Motivated Sequences," in *Some Implications of Linguistic Theory for Applied Linguistics*, ed. S. Pit Corder and Eddy Roulet (Paris: Didier, 1975), pp. 117, 122.

[80] Valdman, *Langue et culture: A Basic Course in French*, (New York: Macmillan, 1975), pp. 6-7, 18, 172-74, 457-58.

[81] Linda Gaylord Piazza, "French Tolerance for Grammatical Errors Made by Americans," *Modern Language Journal*, 64 (1980), 424-25.

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